Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you favor a proposal to increase business license fees as a means to boost government revenue?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Winter Storm

A powerful storm dumped snow, sleet and freezing rain on the southern Plains.

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Plane Crash

A Nomad plane nosedives and slams into two houses in Cotabato City.

MAHARLIKA...Page 13

Cat Fight

This year's Grammy Awards seem to be shaping up as the battle of the blond divas.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

Fitial

Camacho

Fitial respects Guam gov's request for delay in military buildup

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said yesterday that he respects Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho's request to U.S. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus to delay the implementation of the military buildup in Guam beyond 2014.

Camacho wrote Mabus a letter on Thursday, asking him that all Guam military buildup program be "delayed to beyond 2014 to protect the integrity of the III Marine Expeditionary Force and ensure that impacts are minimized to our island infrastructure and socioeconomic services."

Fitial, whose administration is looking at the military buildup as an opportunity to boost the CNMI economy, said he respects Camacho's position on the build-

See BUILDUP on Page 4

House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan), right, addresses his colleagues and Northern Marianas Housing Corp. officials while Rep. Ramon S. Basa (Cov-Saipan) looks on during a joint meeting on Capital Hill yesterday morning.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

CNMI risks losing home loans

- NMHC seeks lawmakers' help
- Options include tapping MPLT
- Due to $5.84M in unpaid guarantor obligation

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Housing Corp. officials asked lawmakers yesterday for help in finding $5.84 million for the agency to meet its guarantor obligation in home loans that are delinquent and in default, or the CNMI risks losing a home loan program by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development.

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Motions to stop the donation of $625,000 denied

Judge says 9-year-old litigation has to end

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson denied yesterday the motions to stop the Garment Workers Trust Fund from donating $625,000 in leftover settlement funds to charitable institutions.

"There simply is no excuse for a last-minute filing that essentially asks the court to re-open the entire eligibility process and start all over again," said Bellas.

See DONATION on Page 4

'The Catcher in the Rye' author J.D. Salinger dies

NEW YORK (AP)—J.D. Salinger, the legendary author, youth hero and fugitive from fame whose "The Catcher in the Rye" shocked and inspired a world he increasingly shunned, has died. He was 91.

Salinger died of natural causes at his home on Wednesday, the author's son, actor Matt Salinger, said in a statement from Salinger's longtime literary representative, Harold Ober As-

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Copies of J.D. Salinger's classic novel "The Catcher in the Rye" as well as his volume of short stories called "Nine Stories" are seen at the Orange Public Library in Orange Village, Ohio on Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010.

FBI donates 1 more vehicle to DPS. **PAGE 2**

Ex-CNMI teachers' rep Bennett retires from PSS. **PAGE 3**

Local

Fund creates position for deputy administrator

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund board of trustees has approved the creation of a new position that would directly help Fund Administrator Mark A. Aguon in his duties as the agency's officer in charge.

During Thursday's regular board meeting, the trustees agreed to open an announcement for a deputy administrator whose main task is to assist the administrator in the management and control of the pension program, the defined benefit plan and defined contribution plans, Member Home Loan Program and Group Health and Life Insurance, and the Workers' Compensation Commission.

Board chair Sixto Igisomar emphasized that the approval was based on the recommendation of the board's personnel committee that reviewed the need for the position.

It was learned that some non-essential positions at the Fund were converted to accommodate the creation of the deputy administrator post.

Aguon emphasized during deliberation that funds for the new post have been certified available by the comptroller and is within the agency's budget.

"Other FTEs were converted and reclassified and funding for the position has been certified and authorized within the budget," Aguon said.

Jerry Crisostomo, the board's second vice chairman and chairman of the operations and personnel committee, said the hiring of a deputy administrator will have minimal impact on the Fund's finances.

Although the position will be announced, he said the committee prefers an internal promotion from the ranks if there are qualified candidates.

"Let's get this thing done. This position is important based on the review of the committee," Igisomar told board members.

Late last year, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial ordered a freeze hiring on all government agencies and instrumentalities due to the continuous decline in government revenue and resources.

Because of this order, Aguon said the agency had explained to the Executive Branch the need to hire for the position, emphasizing that this is a converted and reclassified post from the agency's authorized FTEs.

The administration has approved the new hiring, he said.

A request for proposal was published yesterday by the Fund. The position requires a minimum of bachelor's degree in business administration, finance and accounting, business management, public administration, or other related fields. It also requires at least four years of work experience in supervisor and management level.

The RFP will close on Feb. 12, 2010.

The Fund trustees also approved the re-announcement of a legal counsel position after the initial candidate rejected the job offer.

FBI donates 1 more vehicle to DPS

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

FBI special agent Jim Barry hands over the key to a 1999 Nissan Pathfinder to Department of Public Safety Commissioner Santiago Tudela yesterday outside the FBI's office in Puerto Rico. The Pathfinder is the fourth surplus vehicle the FBI donated to DPS since 2006. Also in the photo are FBI special agents and a police officer.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has again donated a surplus vehicle—a 1999 Nissan Pathfinder—to the Department of Public Safety.

FBI special agents Jim Barry and Joe Auther handed over the vehicle's key to DPS Commissioner Santiago Tudela outside the FBI's office in Puerto Rico yesterday.

Also present during the presentation were some police detectives and an FBI special agent.

Tudela expressed appreciation to the FBI for donating now a total of four vehicles to the department. Just like the three other vehicles, the Criminal Investigation Bureau will use the Pathfinder for its operations.

Barry said the Pathfinder, which has approximately 50,000 miles, is surplus property and would normally have been sold to the public via an auction conducted by the U.S. Government Services Agency.

Barry said the vehicle was removed from auction and designated for donation to DPS at the request of the local FBI office.

"As we rotate vehicles out of our fleet, basically there's auction done by GSA but we know that DPS, as many CNMI agencies are, don't have the resources that they'd like to have," he said.

He said giving this car to DPS will help it become a more effective law enforcement agency and, in the long run, will help the FBI too.

Barry underscored the importance of the FBI and DPS partnership.

"Anywhere you go in United States, the FBI relies heavily on the cooperation of local law enforcement agencies," he said.

In April 2006, the FBI donated four surplus vehicles to DPS and the Office of the Public Auditor.

MVA generates $1.1M in publicity with January FAMs

Three Japanese media familiarization tours visited the Northern Marianas this month, bringing welcomed publicity valued at over $1.1-million for the islands. The media visits were supported by the Marianas Visitors Authority and in-kind donations of MVA members.

"With MVA support including coordination and transportation, as well the multiple donations of our members, we were able to leverage an estimated $1.16-million in Japanese publicity during January through these FAM tours by spending a tiny fraction of that amount," said MVA Managing Director Perry Tenorio. "The January figures underscore why FAMs remain an important strategy to maximize the use of our limited funding."

Trail running magazine *Takatatta* has just finished their coverage of last Saturday's (Jan. 23) Marianas Coffee Trail Run, an annual signature event of the MVA that continues to grow in popularity since its inception three years ago. The full color magazine introduces trail running courses around the world to its 30,000 reading members and will feature the Marianas Coffee Trail Run in six pages of its March 2010 issue. While on-island, the *Takatatta* group also covered a dinner show at Fiesta Resort & Spa, Managaha island, Saipan Botanical Garden, Coffee Care, Joeten Hafa Adai Shopping Center, Himawari, and Country House Restaurant.

MVA

Mai Hasegawa joins the Jan. 23, 2010, Marianas Coffee Trail Run in Saipan as a guest runner for Japan's trail running magazine Takatatta. FAM(iliarization) tours by Takatatta and other media in January 2010 were supported by the Marianas Visitors Authority and garnered $1.1-million in publicity for the Northern Mariana Islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

On the heels of their November 2009 FAM tour of Saipan and Tinian, the annual Global Trotters Travel Guidebook made good on their promise to return to the Northern Marianas in order to visit Rota and Tinian for inclusion in their 2010-2011 publication. The full color book introduces dive spots around the world and publishes 45,000 copies annually. The tour stayed at Rota Resort, Hafadai Beach Hotel, and Saipan Grand Hotel while discovering the wonders of Rota plus Managaha, a number of beaches, restaurants and shops.

The Chukyo TV program Chu-site of Nagoya was also in Saipan last week to prepare a short video promoting golf at Laolao Bay Golf Resort, Kingfisher Golflinks, and Coral Ocean Point. To inform the show's 400,000+ viewership about CNMI attrations, the video crew also covered Managaha island, popular island tour sites, Fiesta Resort & Spa, Hyatt Regency Saipan, various restaurants, and other locations. Other sponsors of the Chukyo FAM tour included Pacific Islands Club Saipan, Fiesta Resort, and Hyatt Regency Saipan, and Mitsue Restaurant. ***(MVA)***

WANTED

NEWS REPORTER

Saipan Tribune, the CNMI's first daily newspaper, is looking for a full-time news reporter to join our team.

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Ex-CNMI teachers' rep Bennett retires from PSS

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Ambrose Bennett, the former CNMI Teachers' Representative to the State Board of Education, has retired from service after over 17 years of teaching in public schools.

Bennett

Bennett is a Social Studies teacher in Kagman High School. Yesterday, his students dedicated a special farewell gathering for their mentor on campus.

Besides Kagman High, Bennett also served three other public campuses on island—Oleai Elementary School, Hopwood Junior High School, and Marianas High School.

In an interview yesterday, Bennett said a major reason for his retirement is the pressing financial needs of his family. He has two daughters going to college and he said he has to earn more to support their studies.

Bennett said he is among the many public school teachers whose salary has been frozen by the system. He said his salary has been stuck at $47,000 per annum as a result of the PSS compensation plan that has been in place since 2006.

"My salary hasn't been changed. I was among those educators whose salary were frozen and I have to do something because I need to make sure that my daughters can go to college," he said, adding that he intends to seek opportunities in private or government agencies here and off-island.

Bennett plans to use his retirement money for the enrollment of his two daughters next semester.

He described his more than 17 years of service at PSS as a "roller-coaster ride." He said he's thankful for the opportunity to serve the CNMI's children and make a difference in their education.

"I will miss my students," he said.

Bennett was appointed acting CNMI teachers' representative in 2001 and formally assumed the position in 2004. His term expired in January 2008. To date, nobody has been assigned to replace him pending the resolution of some appointment issues.

Bennett is also a former officer of the Association of Commonwealth Teachers.

As he retires, he said he has only one message for PSS and the Board of Education: Show commitment to schoolteachers.

"I hope PSS will start taking care of our teachers. If our goal is students first, teachers must be accorded second priority. At present, I can say that there's no real commitment to our teachers," he told *Saipan Tribune.*

Bennett attended San Diego State University for his masters in educational leadership, with additional political science courses in U.S. constitutional history from 1996 to 1998. He is an alumni of Northern Marianas College, where he attended classes from 1992 to 1993.

Bennett said he has an associate degree in accounting from the State Technical Institute in Memphis Tennessee and was a presenter in a number of education conferences here and off-island, including professional development seminars for all PSS employees.

In 2005, he was accepted to the Who's Who Among American Teachers and authored some educational books and publications, including America in the Pacific series and a Micronesia-based economics workbook.

NMC alumni members elect officers

The Northern Marianas College Alumni Association recently held a general meeting to elect new officers for the NMC Alumni Association. During the meeting, alumni members elected Jack Kiyoshi as president, Celina Babauta as vice president, John Manalo as secretary, and Irene Tudela as treasurer.

"The composition of the elected officers represents a rich diversity of backgrounds and experience," said NMC president Lorraine T. Cabrera. "We look forward to working closely with them to advance the interests of our graduates, the college, and the CNMI."

Alumni Association president Kiyoshi graduated from NMC in 2000 with a double major in associate in arts in liberal arts and associate in applied science in criminal justice. After graduating from NMC, he earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from a four-year university. He currently works under the human resources department at NMC.

After graduating from high school, vice president Babauta has been taking classes at NMC. She has more than 24 credits and is continually in pursuit of a business degree. She was a former vice president for Saipan Southern High School Parent Teacher Association.

John Manalo, who was elected secretary, is currently an NMC student with more than 30 credits. He is expecting to graduate with his bachelor's degree in special education in 2011. Manalo also holds a master's degree in business administration from Prescott University and currently works at the college under the Community Development Institute Department as a program manager.

NMC
The newly elected Northern Marianas College alumni officers and NMC's interim president Lorraine T. Cabrera (second from right) during the general meeting held at Pacific Islands Club last Friday. From left, John Manalo (secretary), Celina Babauta (vice president), Jack Kiyoshi (president) and Irene Tudela (treasurer).

Treasurer Irene Tudela earned her associate's degree in business accounting from NMC in 2005. She currently works as a financial aid specialist under the financial aid office at NMC.

Graduates of NMC or those who have earned at least 24 academic credits are encouraged to register as members of the Alumni Association. For more information contact Kiyoshi at 234-5498 Ext. 1022, or email jackk@nmcnet.edu. ***(NMC)***

Live-fire exercises on Farallon de Medinilla

SANTA RITA, Guam—The U.S. Air Force will conduct live-fire and laser training exercises on the island of Farallon de Medinilla daily from Feb. 1 to 4, from 10am to 8pm. The Navy will conduct laser training at Warning Area-517 on Feb. 2, from 8am to 4pm and Feb. 3, from 9am to 3pm.

The public, especially fisherman, commercial pilots and marine tour operators, are advised to stay clear from these areas during the times and dates indicated.

W-517 is an irregular shaped polygon comprising of 14,000 nautical miles of airspace that begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. W-517 supports surface and aerial gunnery, missiles, and laser exercises. This will affect fishing in the vicinity of Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Bank.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. Farallon de Medinilla plays a special and unique role in national defense because its location provides access frequency that supports established training requirements. In addition, the air and sea space in the Farallon provides sufficient room for the many different attack profiles necessary to replicate training opportunities in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. ***(PR)***

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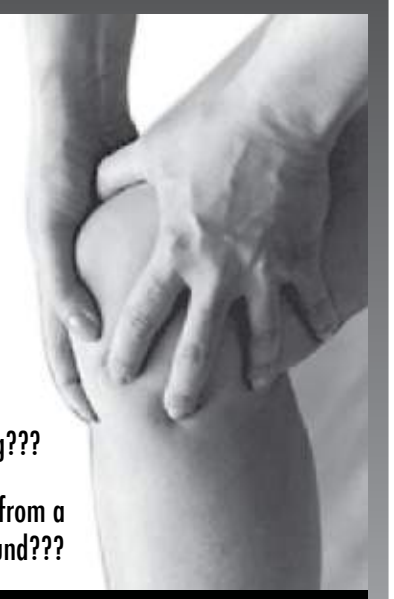

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CATCHER

From Page 1

sociates, Inc. He had lived for decades in self-imposed isolation in a small, remote house in Cornish, N.H.

Salinger fans shared their grief Thursday on social networks. Topics such as "Salinger" and "Holden Caufield" were among the most popular on Twitter. CNN's Larry King tweeted that "Catcher" is his favorite book. Humorist John Hodgman wrote: "I prefer to think JD Salinger has just decided to become extra reclusive."

As of Thursday night, "Catcher" was in the top 20 on Amazon.com's best-seller list.

"The Catcher in the Rye" became both required and restricted reading, periodically banned by a school board or challenged by parents worried by its frank language and the irresistible chip on Holden's shoulder.

"I'm aware that a number of my friends will be saddened, or shocked, or shocked-saddened, over some of the chapters of 'The Catcher in the Rye.' Some of my best friends are children. In fact, all of my best friends are children," Salinger wrote in 1955, in a short note for "20th Century Authors."

"It's almost unbearable to me to realize that my book will be kept on a shelf out of their reach," he added. Salinger also wrote the novellas "Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters" and "Seymour—An Introduction," both featuring the neurotic, fictional Glass family that appeared in much of his work.

His last published story, "Hapworth 16, 1928," ran in The New Yorker in 1965.

"I love to write and I assure you I write regularly," Salinger said in a brief interview with the Baton Rouge (La.) Advocate in 1980. "But I write for myself, for my own pleasure. And I want to be left alone to do it."

Jerome David Salinger was born Jan. 1, 1919, in New York City. His father was a wealthy importer of cheeses and meat and the family lived for years on Park Avenue.

He served in the Army from 1942 to 1946, carrying a typewriter with him most of the time, writing "whenever I can find the time and an unoccupied foxhole," he told a friend.

DONATION

From Page 1

A group of former garment workers had wanted the court to issue a temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction that would prevent trust fund board chair Timothy Bellas from giving away the leftover funds.

Munson pointed out that the nine-year-old litigation has to end at some point and, after years of court monitoring, that point has been reached.

"There is simply no acceptable reason for the filers' last-minute effort to have the court begin the process anew, particularly when most of the cy pres money had been distributed prior to the filing of these two motions," the judge said.

Cy pres refers to funds in class lawsuits and other types of proceedings that for some reasons cannot be distributed to the intended recipients.

In a last-ditch effort, seven persons purporting to be acting pro se (without a lawyer) filed the motions on Thursday to stop the trust fund from donating $625,000 in leftover funds from the $20-million settlement of the class action against the garment industry.

Former garment workers and their supporters held a rally outside the law office of Bellas in Garapan on Thursday. The workers, holding placards demanding money that they said they deserve, stated they are the "real charity as former garment workers."

In his order, Munson said this very high profile lawsuit that was filed in 2001 was settled several years ago with the payment of $20 million to a settlement fund by the defendants.

"That sum was to be distributed to garment factory workers who had allegedly been underpaid or had otherwise incurred damages at the hands of defendants," Munson said.

He said the task of determining what information should be received from claimants to the fund to show their entitlement to a payment and how their eligibility would be determined was given to the Garment Oversight Board, established and overseen by the court.

Munson said the court closely monitored the entire process and that all the proceedings and reports submitted by GOB are and always have been matters of public record.

"Additionally, all facets of this lawsuit, since its inception and continuing to date, have been reported assiduously in the local media," he said.

The judge said the task of locating and distributing the money to beneficiaries was given to a successor board that oversaw the trust fund.

Again, Munson noted, that process was highly publicized and was monitored and approved by the court.

He said when the trust fund board concluded that it has exhausted all efforts to reach all of the workers who might be entitled to a payment and that it still had approximately $675,000 remaining, the board and the court decided to utilize a cy pres trust to distribute the remaining settlement money to charitable or non-profit organizations, in particular those that had been instrumental in assisting bereft garment factory workers over the years.

"To that end, notices were issued to the public, seeking applicants," Munson said.

After meetings between the trust fund board and the court, Munson said a list of recipients was finalized and notice was given that a distribution of money to these entities would be made Thursday, Jan. 28, at 2pm.

The workers' motions, the judge noted, were not filed until 2:47pm, after the distributions of checks had begun.

"More to the point is that the parties who filed the motions have known for years of the process being employed by the court to determine eligibility for payments from the settlement fund and for at least several months of the court's intention to distribute the remaining funds to charitable and non-profit groups," Munson said.

The judge stressed that the court and the trust fund board have been scrupulous in the exercise of their duties regarding distribution of the settlement monies.

Munson said all actions have been well-publicized in the local media and no part of the court's file has ever not been made available to the public.

HOME LOANS

From Page 1

The housing program is for low-income families.

NMHC said it needs $5.84 million to save hundreds of delinquent homeowners from facing foreclosure.

Yesterday's meeting between NMHC and at least 15 lawmakers came almost a year after NMHC wrote a letter to the presiding officers of the Legislature and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial asking for help for a guarantor obligation amounting to $5 million at the time.

"But nothing happened a year later. With the new legislative leadership, we hope this time they will listen. We need to continue this program to provide housing to low-income families but first we need to settle the obligations and we don't have the money right now," NMHC mortgage and credit manager Jesse Palacios told *Saipan Tribune.*

NMHC board chair Marcie Tomokane, and NMHC corporate director Joshua Sasamoto took turns answering lawmakers' questions about the home loan program.

NMHC has 314 active home loans under the USDA-RD 502 program.

Of this number, 116 accounts are considered delinquent or in default and NMHC needs $5.84 million to meet its loan guarantor obligation.

"Without payment, we jeopardize our future relationship with the USDA-RD. Although we already suspended the loans, we need to resume it to provide affordable housing to people," Palacios said.

Before USDA-RD can provide new loan funds, it wants to make sure that NMHC can meet its present guaranty obligations and will be able to continue as a viable guarantor for future loans.

"The immediate need right now is $5.8 million. We want to save families from losing homes," Tomokane told members of the Senate and House of Representatives in a joint meeting at the legislative building on Capital Hill yesterday morning.

Tomokane said some that while many families stop paying their home loans altogether because of financial hardships, others continue to pay but at an amount lesser than what they are supposed to be paying.

"Others go from $300 to $200, and we continue to work with them. We understand their efforts to save their homes," she said.

The two-hour meeting brought up options for the CNMI government to come up with the $5.8 million, including tapping the Marianas Public Lands Trust or the NMI Retirement Fund, or appropriating money through legislation.

'Tap MPLT'

House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) favored tapping MPLT investment fund.

"To me, the only resolution here is MPLT. But the Constitution does not authorize us to force MPLT to do it. I will talk to the governor about this and tell him only MPLT can come up with the money. If MPLT does not agree, I will ask all the MPLT board members to resign. We don't have time," Tenorio said.

MPLT board of trustees member Pedro R. Deleon Guerrero, when asked for comment, said MPLT cannot comment on the issue unless the trustees receive an investment proposal or loan proposal in writing.

"As of today, we have not received any specific request for such loan, and MPLT is not aware of the NMHC meeting with lawmakers," Deleon Guerrero said in a phone interview.

The USDA-RD wants the "bad loans" fixed but as guarantor, NMHC said it does not have sufficient liquid assets to meet its guaranty commitment of $5.84 million in defaulted home loans under the current USDA-RD program.

Because of the depressed market condition, proceeds from the sales of the homes were insufficient to pay the USDA-RD under the current guaranty agreement.

Palacios said NMHC was supposed to pay USDA-RD yesterday.

"Since we guaranteed all the loans, we need to come up with the money to pay them off. Since we're unsuccessful in trying to sell all these properties, we have to pay them (USDA-RD) a hundred percent," Palacios said.

'Who's next?'

Rep. Ray N. Yumul (R-Saipan) said NMHC should not resume the home loan program until the financial problems are settled.

He said the CNMI government is also broke, and it should not set a precedent by bailing out NMHC.

"After NMHC, who's next?" he asked.

Tomokane said this is "not a bailout."

"We just want to save families from losing their homes," the NMHC board chair told lawmakers.

The House speaker asked NMHC whether MPLT will not lose its investment should it agree to the $5.84 million investment request.

NMHC officials said they will work with MPLT to ensure it gets its investment back.

Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) reiterated his recommendations for NMHC to also request the NMI Retirement Fund for help, and for the Legislature to appropriate the amount.

'Where do we go from here?'

House Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro (Cov-Saipan) said the issue should be brought to closure.

"So where do we go from here? What can we do? What do you expect from us?" she asked.

Senate President Paul A. Manglona (R-Rota) said NMHC and lawmakers should meet again on Feb. 11, but a draft bill or joint resolution should be ready before that time to keep things moving.

NMHC volunteered to draft the bill, copies of which will be distributed to lawmakers for their review.

Besides Tenorio, Manglona, Ogumoro, Yumul and Deleon Guerrero, the other lawmakers who were present at yesterday's meeting included Rep. Eliceo Cabrera (R-Saipan), Rep. Tony Sablan (R-Saipan), Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan), Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan), Rep. Ramon Basa (Cov-Saipan), Rep. Rafael Demapan (Cov-Saipan), Rep. Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan), House Floor Leader George Camacho (Cov-Saipan), Sen. Pete P. Reyes (R-Saipan), and Sen. Francisco Cruz (R-Tinian).

BUILDUP

From Page 1

up, which aims to relocate U.S. Marines from Okinawa, Japan to Guam.

The 15- to $20-billion military buildup in Guam includes the construction of military training ranges on Tinian, two-thirds of which is leased by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Because Guam cannot accommodate all training for the relocating Marines, the military looks at Tinian to provide opportunities for training groups of 200 Marines or larger due to greater land availability. Tinian is only about 100 miles or 160 kilometers away from Guam.

"If the governor of Guam and its people feel that there is a need to delay its implementation, then that is a position rightfully reserved for them. Therefore, Governor Fitial does not intend to write a separate letter to Secretary Mabus. It is important to recognize that without a buildup in Guam, there would be no anticipated impact on the Commonwealth," said press secretary Angel A. Demapan when asked for comment on Camacho's request.

In his two-page letter to Mabus, Camacho said Article 2 of the Guam International Agreement clearly states that the U.S. shall take necessary measures for the relocation of the U.S. Marines, including funding for projects to develop facilities in Guam.

"I believe that a request for an extension would help lessen the impact of the military buildup on Guam. In fact, during our village workshop on Jan. 20, I expressed my intention to ask the United States to consider extending their deadline for the buildup. The extension will greatly impact every area of public concern. It will lessen the pressure currently being placed on our people to accommodate a significant influx in our population," said Camacho.

He said in order to ensure that the Guam military buildup program is fully implemented as planned, he asked that the Adaptive Program Techniques as identified in the draft Environmental Impact Statement be used to extend the construction phase of the program.

Camacho said this will enable Guam to be better prepared for the impacts associated with the Marine relocation while protecting the integrity of the III Marine Expeditionary Force.

"I believe that this request is consistent with the Guam International Agreement signed by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Japan Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone on Feb. 17, 2009," he told Mabus.

Mabus was one of ranking U.S. military officials to visit Saipan and Guam last year.

Camacho said there is support of the relocation of U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam and overall support for the U.S. armed services.

"However, we must not overlook the reality that we have a fragile territorial economy, posses a limited amount of financial resources and lack the capacity to absorb the impacts of 20 years worth of growth in a five-year time frame," he said.

The request for delay comes at a time when the CNMI and Guam are preparing comments on the 11,000 pages of documents on the military buildup's draft Environmental Impact Statement. The deadline for submitting comments is on Feb. 17.

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'SO...WHY PAY MORE IF YOU CAN PAY LESS'

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

The State of the Union

The Barack Obama who mounted the podium this week for his first State of the Union address is the same man who ascended to the presidency a year ago: even-tempered, intelligent, charismatic. Yet the political rough-and-tumble of his first 12 months in office—especially the stunning defeat of his party's candidate in the Jan. 19 Massachusetts U.S. Senate election—has cast his signature health-care initiative into limbo and diminished, at least temporarily, his once dominant stature. His challenge this week was to restore confidence and reassert leadership.

As a result, many Americans were probably listening for a less partisan, more focused and more fiscally responsible approach to their main concerns, the economy and jobs. What Mr. Obama actually provided was a little something for everyone, sometimes conciliatory, sometimes combative, often sounding much like a campaign speech, only longer.

He took "my share of the blame" for "not explaining" health care better, but cast plenty of blame on the administration he replaced for problems he inherited. He boasted that the number of al-Qaida fighters killed last year was "far more than in 2008." He did not back away from his health-care drive, but neither did he offer a precise route to adopting legislation. He reiterated his support for Democratic financial reform and climate-change legislation, but offered an olive branch of support for Republican-favored nuclear power and offshore drilling.

Similarly, he proposed tax cuts for small businesses hiring new workers, along with small-bore proposals to help the middle class: increased tax credits for child and dependent care, expanded retirement accounts, more generous terms for student-loan repayment. Though not expensive as federal programs go, these would nevertheless add to the deficit. So the president offered countervailing small-bore proposals on that front: a three-year freeze on about 17 percent of the federal budget and more effective disclosure of congressional "earmarks" on the Internet.

He promised to "strengthen our trade relations ... with key partners like South Korea, Panama and Colombia" but did not commit to seeking ratification of free-trade agreements that are pending with all three. Those agreements would create jobs but are unpopular with some unions and Democratic members of Congress.

Mr. Obama vowed to keep trying to improve "the tone of our politics." And to address what he called "a deficit of trust—deep and corrosive doubts about how Washington works that have been growing for years," he endorsed unspecified legislation to circumvent the Supreme Court's ruling allowing unlimited corporate political spending and greater disclosure of lobbyist contacts with the White House and Congress. But in promising to "do our work openly," Mr. Obama did not quite convince that he has a new plan for doing it better.

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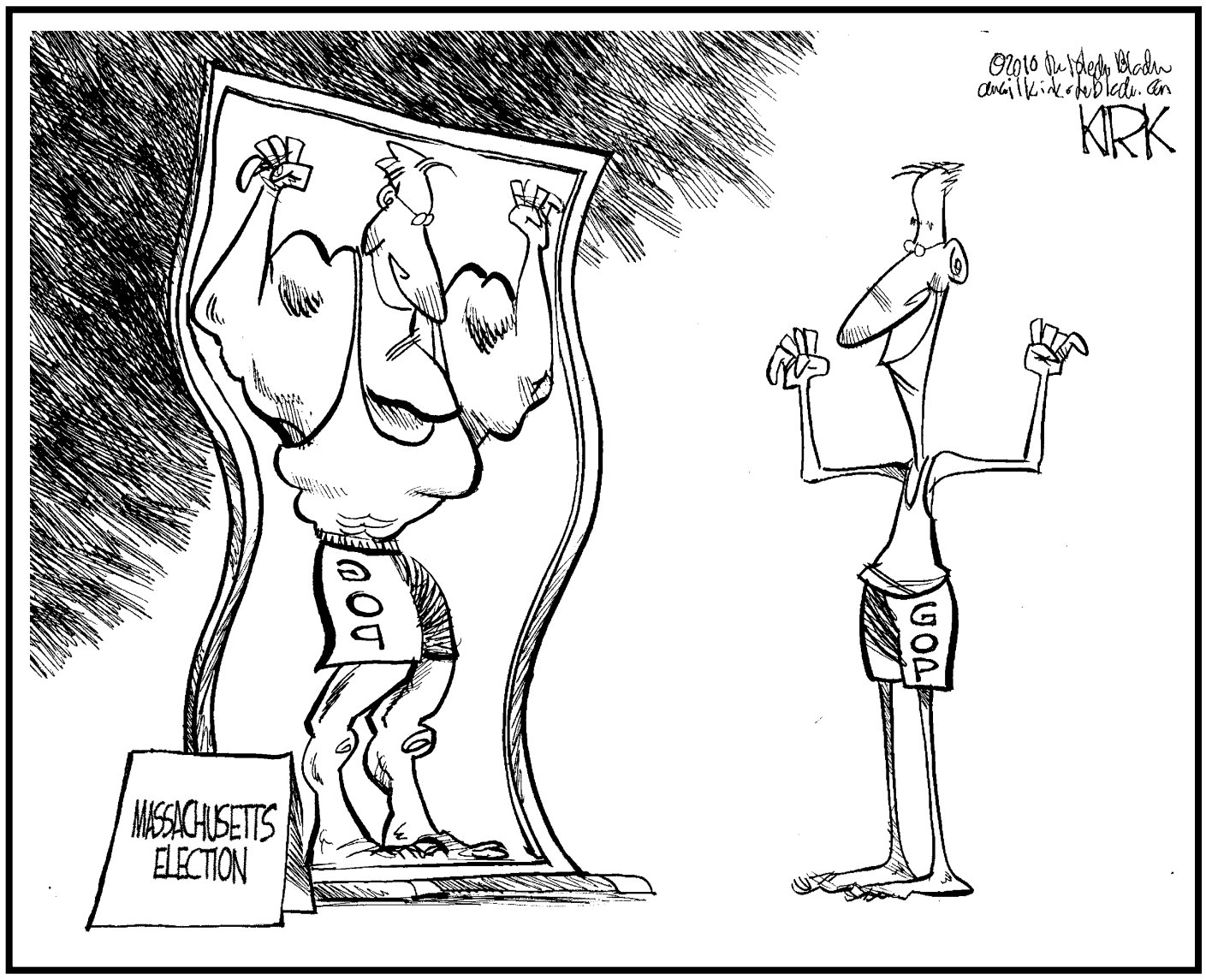

Terrorists will strike America again

By GREGORY F. TREVERTON
Los Angeles Times

Gregory F. Treverton, a former vice chairman of the National Intelligence Council, directs the Rand Corp.'s Center for Global Risk and Security and is the author of Intelligence for an Age of Terror. *He wrote this for the* Los Angeles Times.

The Obama administration's mea culpa over the failure to prevent the attempted bombing of a U.S. airliner bound for Detroit on Christmas Day is understandable but misses the point. Yes, the United States can do better at catching would-be attackers; that will always be the case. But the truth is that there is no absolute security—short of conceding victory to the terrorists by making it impossible for foreigners to visit the United States, hellish for Americans to fly and difficult for all to live normal lives.

America's tolerance for terrorism cannot be zero. Although we obviously aim to do as much as possible, preventing every attack is an unattainable goal. The country needs to steel itself for the near-certainty that there will at some point be another major strike on U.S. territory.

Even if the United States curtailed civil liberties to a degree most citizens would find intolerable, sooner or later some suicidal terrorist would find a way to manage a successful attack. The greatest threat may come from lone wolves with scanty records, as is apparently the case with the accused Fort Hood shooter, or from someone who acts alone even if trained and equipped by one of al-Qaeda's offshoots, as the would-be Detroit bomber allegedly did.

The Christmas Day episode highlights three critical points.

First is how much progress U.S. intelligence has made. The 9/11 attacks were blamed on a failure to "connect the dots." But foiling that plot would have required not just creative leaps of foresight by intelligence analysts, but also the political will to take draconian actions to prevent a large-scale attack organized from abroad on U.S. soil (something that hadn't happened since Pearl Harbor and was therefore almost unthinkable).

By contrast, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab and his alleged Yemeni helpers were on the U.S. radar screen. Simply singling him out for a body search might have done the job. The intelligence community certainly failed to connect the dots, but at least this time it had the dots.

Second, the Christmas Day plot demonstrates that much of what passes for security is a waste of time and money. It often seems designed more to bother people than to prevent terrorism. The mass screening of departing passengers in Amsterdam was, almost by definition, too little to catch the "underwear bomber" and probably too much for his innocent fellow passengers.

Finding the right balance is terribly difficult, but what's needed is less mass screening of all those proverbial grandmothers. Racial and ethnic profiling is not only provocative, it is also ineffective, because it produces far too many "false positives"—people subjected to secondary screening without cause. Rather, what we need is more screening and profiling based on intelligence to provide grounds for suspicion (which should have included the would-be Detroit bomber) or on suspicious behavior (like having no luggage or paying cash for the ticket).

Third, the public furor over the foiled plot shows that more perspective on terrorism is essential. Terrorism frightens Americans because it seems so random. But it does not kill many. In the five years after 2001, the number of Americans killed per year in terrorist attacks worldwide was never more than 100, and the toll some years was barely in double figures. Compare that with an average of 63 by tornadoes, 692 in bicycle accidents and 41,616 in motor-vehicle-related accidents.

Calling another attack "intolerable" is wishful thinking, not making policy. Some honest talk would be useful, so that when the next major attack comes—as it surely will —we can respond rationally and not just emotionally.

Soon after 9/11, I was seated at dinner next to former Defense Secretary Harold Brown. I asked him how much of a threat to the United States the attacks represented. His answer surprised me at the time, but he was right: On a scale of 1 to 10, the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 was an 8, he said; 9/11 was a 3. Those who lost their lives and their loved ones suffered mightily, and, as with any disaster, the psychological effect was magnified by the number of people who were killed at the same time. But for the nation, it was a blow, not a mortal threat.

When it comes to weathering terror attacks, the reaction of Israelis is instructive. After every bombing, they clean up as fast as possible. Thus, life can go on and the terrorists won't be given a victory. By contrast, Americans let fear of terrorism stop life. So the terrorists win.

America's security and intelligence apparatus can always do better. But it will never be able to stop every terrorist plot—a grim reality Americans need to grasp.

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India stands to gain from Google flap

By WILLIAM PESEK
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William Pesek is a Bloomberg News *columnist.*

TOKYO—All the buzz about losers if Google Inc. leaves China ignores a potential winner: India.

In any China-versus-India contest, 2009 belonged to China. Its 10.7 percent growth in the fourth quarter blew the doors off the 6.5 percent India may have experienced. It will be the toast of the town in Davos, Switzerland, this week at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum.

China's "old economy" is clearly booming, and investors haven't made a lot of money betting against it. Why, then, would China's leaders imperil their future prospects as 2010 gets under way? That's what they may do by letting Google, the Information Age's biggest name, walk away.

"I would look going forward for new investment increasingly to go somewhere else—probably India, Brazil and other big markets," William Reinsch, president of the National Foreign Trade Council in Washington, said on Jan. 21.

Google's announcement this month that it is considering leaving China amid misgivings about censoring the Internet won't change everything on its own. China's top-down economy is thriving, while India's is bureaucratic, inefficient and notoriously corrupt.

Yet India has a track record of innovation and a stable of internationally competitive companies that China doesn't. India also has far superior laws on intellectual property and corporate governance. And China's willingness to blow off Google plays to India's relative advantage in these areas.

China should be concerned about the most influential Internet tool bypassing its $4.3 trillion economy and 1.3 billion people—and the specter of other Silicon Valley giants following suit. Executives at multinational companies who dragged their feet on diversifying investments away from China may now expedite the process.

At issue is the next phase of China's development. Too much attention is on ideas of the last century: keeping labor cheap, holding down the currency, picking and subsidizing national champions and favoring exports for growth. China's spat with Google underlines how the Communist Party relies on the strategies of yesterday, not tomorrow. It's really a proxy for how the past and future are colliding.

Who knows, perhaps China's mix of free-market policies and limits on free speech is a viable new model. It's possible that China can thrive while censoring cyberspace and the media. Perhaps China will prove that it can leapfrog over years of domestic company building—as with Lenovo Group Ltd.'s purchase of IBM's personal- computer business. China does, after all, have $2.4 trillion of currency reserves to deploy around the globe.

The odds don't favor it, though. Letting Google leave may dull the long-term benefits of the trillions of yuan that China is throwing at the economy. It limits the participation of entrepreneurs in an age where ideas and impulses mean more than sweat on factory floors. It also makes it less likely that massive stimulus efforts lead to the kind of self-sustaining, indigenous economy that China needs.

The question is where China wants to be in five or 10 years. The world is now driven by knowledge flows, making it vital to stay attuned to the latest developments in any field. Only then can innovators ride the latest waves in international business and finance and create the hundreds of millions of jobs needed to raise living standards.

Here, my thoughts are with India's billionaires. They must be rubbing their hands together in glee as China's leaders make an expensive miscalculation. According to a 2008 Forbes magazine poll, India may have the most billionaires by 2017.

China's ultra-wealthy are growing in numbers. It's better, though, for one's billions to come from new ideas than from bubbles in the Chinese stock market, which rose 80 percent last year. What China lacks is a growing roster of homegrown knowledge-based and technology outfits creating jobs, pushing the country up the value chain and inspiring young people to become the next Bill Gates.

Nandan Nilekani, the co-founder of Bangalore-based Infosys Technologies, is often called India's answer to Microsoft's co-founder. When asked about the secret of India's success in technology, Nilekani points to a free press and a rabid embrace of information flows. In other words, if India censored cyberspace, companies such as Infosys or Wipro wouldn't be what they are today.

India's challenges are overwhelming. It scores low on global efficiency scales, infrastructure is dodgy and bottlenecks to investment are many. India lags far behind China in reducing poverty. That's where billionaires such as Nilekani re-enter our story.

Millions of rural poor people claim that corrupt officials steal their paltry wages, withdrawing money from post-office accounts without providing proof of identity. India turned to Infosys to devise a fraud-proof deterrent.

A year from now, Nilekani will roll out the world's biggest biometric database to enable India's 1.2 billion people, half of whom lack access to financial services, to open an ICICI Bank Ltd. account or sign up for a Vodafone Group Plc mobile phone.

It's not the Three Gorges Dam or the Shanghai skyline, yet India's technology billionaires are helping the government devise new strategies and spread the benefits of growth. China, for all its advantages, could use more of that dynamic. Waving goodbye to Google won't help.

With assistance from Bibhudatta Pradhan and Saikat Chatterjee in New Delhi.

The spirit of Mao Zedong

By LEE EDWARDS
The Heritage Foundation

Lee Edwards is distinguished fellow in conservative thought at The Heritage Foundation and chairman of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation (www.victimsofcommunism.org).

Can you name the greatest mass murderer of the 20th century? No, it wasn't Hitler or Stalin. It was Mao Zedong.

According to the authoritative "Black Book of Communism," an estimated 65 million Chinese died as a result of Mao's repeated, merciless attempts to create a new "socialist" China. Anyone who got in his way was done away with _ by execution, imprisonment or forced famine.

For Mao, the No. 1 enemy was the intellectual. The so-called Great Helmsman reveled in his blood-letting, boasting, "What's so unusual about Emperor Shih Huang of the China Dynasty? He had buried alive 460 scholars only, but we have buried alive 46,000 scholars." Mao was referring to a major "accomplishment" of the Great Cultural Revolution, which from 1966-1976 transformed China into a great House of Fear.

The most inhumane example of Mao's contempt for human life came when he ordered the collectivization of China's agriculture under the ironic slogan, the "Great Leap Forward." A deadly combination of lies about grain production, disastrous farming methods (profitable tea plantations, for example, were turned into rice fields), and misdistribution of food produced the worse famine in human history.

Deaths from hunger reached more than 50 percent in some Chinese villages. The total number of dead from 1959 to 1961 was between 30 million and 40 million _ the population of California.

Only five years later, when he sensed that revolutionary fervor in China was waning, Mao proclaimed the Cultural Revolution. Gangs of Red Guards _ young men and women between 14 and 21 _ roamed the cities targeting revisionists and other enemies of the state, especially teachers.

Professors were dressed in grotesque clothes and dunce caps, their faces smeared with ink. They were then forced to get down on all fours and bark like dogs. Some were beaten to death, some even eaten _ all for the promulgation of Maoism. A reluctant Mao finally called in the Red Army to put down the marauding Red Guards when they began attacking Communist Party members, but not before 1 million Chinese died.

All the while, Mao kept expanding the laogai, a system of 1,000 forced labor camps throughout China. Harry Wu, who spent 19 years in labor camps, has estimated that from the 1950s through the 1980s, 50 million Chinese passed through the Chinese version of the Soviet gulag. Twenty million died as a result of the primitive living conditions and 14-hour work days.

Such calculated cruelty exemplified his Al Capone philosophy: "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun."

And yet Mao Zedong remains the most honored figure in the Chinese Communist Party. At one end of historic Tiananmen Square is Mao's mausoleum, visited daily by large, respectful crowds. At the other end of the square is a giant portrait of Mao above the entrance leading into the Forbidden City, the favorite site of visitors, Chinese and foreign.

In the spirit of Mao, China's present rulers continue to oppress intellectuals and other dissidents such as human-rights activist Liu Xiaobo. He was sentenced last month to 11 years in prison for "inciting subversion of state power." His offense: signing Charter 08, which calls on the government to respect basic civil and human rights within a democratic framework. .

China presents itself as a vast market for U.S. companies and investors. But some U.S. companies are taking a second look at doing business in a country which considers Mao Zedong its patron saint. Google has said it is reconsidering its operations in China after discovering a sophisticated cyber attack on its e-mail which the government must have initiated or approved.

Google has revealed what many in the Internet world have known for some time _ China routinely hacks into U.S. and Western Web sites for national security and other valuable information. Mao would have enthusiastically applauded this intellectual rape.

I wonder: would President Obama be so ready to kowtow to China if in the middle of Beijing there was a mausoleum of Hitler and, hanging from the gate to the Forbidden City, a giant swastika?

Readers may write to the author in care of The Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington, D.C. 20002; Web site: www.heritage.org. Information about Heritage's funding may be found at http://www.heritage.org/about/reports.cfm.

Tear down these virtual walls

By CARL BILDT
Special to The Washington Post

The writer is Sweden's minister of foreign affairs.

A decade and a half ago, when I was prime minister of Sweden, then-President Bill Clinton and I had the first e-mail exchange between heads of state. Already our two nations were at the forefront of the technological revolution about to transform our world.

We had just left an era in which communist dictatorships had tried to control fax machines and the Moscow phone directory was a closely held secret. Today, fax machines are definitely yesterday, and classical phone directories are more or less out of business.

Since that groundbreaking e-mail exchange we have seen the revolution in mobile communication coming out of Europe and the Internet revolution coming out of the United States transform the politics and economics of our world.

Today there are approximately 4 billion mobile phone users worldwide. The number of Internet users is approaching 2 billion. For several billion people, the village has become a truly global one.

Two decades ago a wall made of concrete, built to divide the free and unfree, was torn down. Today it is the freedom of cyberspace that is under threat from regimes as keen as dictatorships past to control and limit the possibilities of their citizens. They are trying to build firewalls against freedom.

At the end of the day, I am convinced they are fighting a losing battle—that cyber walls are as certain to fall as the walls of concrete once did.

When Sweden held the presidency of the European Union last year, we raised the issue of Internet freedom as part of our human rights agenda, and we will continue to highlight this and related issues.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's address on Internet freedom last week has brought this issue the political attention it deserves. We should now forge a new transatlantic partnership for protecting and promoting the freedoms of cyberspace. Together, we should call for all these walls to be torn down.

Our efforts to promote and protect the freedoms of cyberspace should go hand in hand with protecting the infrastructure of cyberspace, which is increasingly important to our societies.

Much like the way the rule of the law is critical to protecting the freedoms we enjoy as citizens in our societies, and international law protects the peace between our nations, we must seek to shape the rules that will protect the rights and the freedom of cyberspace.

This area of international affairs is still in its infancy but is of tremendous importance for the future of the international community. There are difficult issues to tackle—as we are beginning to see in the debates in our respective countries. They deserve to be at the very top of the agenda of nations cherishing the values of freedom.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼74°	▲85° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

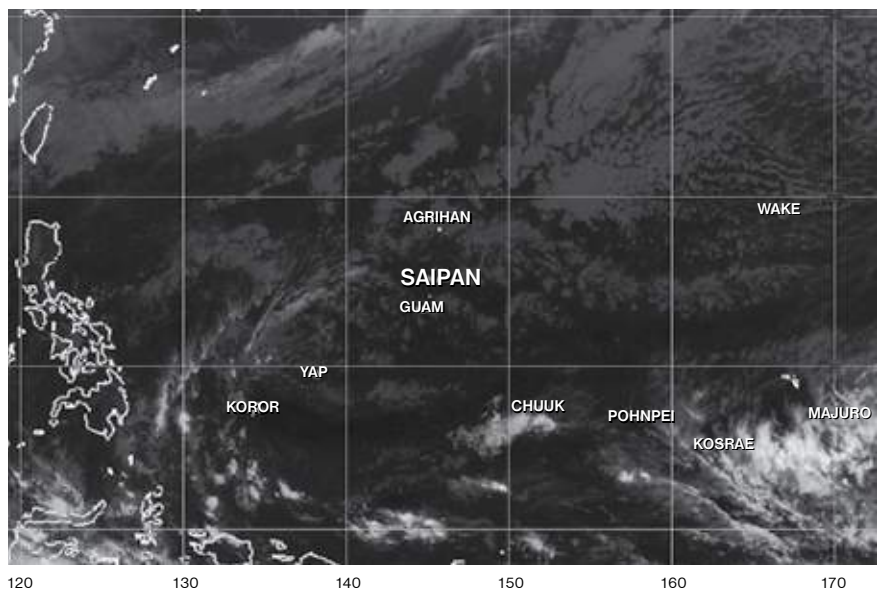
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲85	▼74
Palau	Sunny	▲90	▼77
Yap	Sunny	▲90	▼77
Chuuk	Sunny	▲89	▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲84	▼76
Kosrae	Sunny	▲88	▼75
Majuro	Showers	▲83	▼79

Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲77	▼68
Beijing	Sunny	▲42	▼22
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	▲76	▼68
Honolulu	Showers	▲76	▼65
London	Cloudy	▲41	▼30
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲64	▼48
Manila	Sunny	▲84	▼74
Melbourne	Sunny	▲90	▼71
Miami	Cloudy	▲81	▼64
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲26	▼17
Osaka	Cloudy	▲46	▼35
Paris	Cloudy	▲35	▼29
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	▲51	▼32
Rome	Rain	▲51	▼40
Salem	Showers	▲50	▼36
San Francisco	Showers	▲57	▼44
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲40	▼18
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲50	▼36
Washington, DC	Snow	▲27	▼20

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front enters the discussion area northeast of Wake Island at 21N180 and extends southwestward to southeast of Wake at 16N170E then continues west-southwestward as a shear line to end east of Guam at 13N147E. Clouds and patchy rain are found along and up to 200 miles northwest of the cold front. Patchy clouds with light rain are seen along and up to 300 miles north of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough extends eastward from south of Mindanao through a weak circulation centered southeast of Koror near 3N139E to beyond 180 at 3N. A low-level trough reaches north-northwestward from the circulation near Koror to 20N133E. Aided by upper-level divergence. Scattered showers are occurring near the low-level trough south of Koror and Yap between 2N and 6N from 132E to 138E. Similar conditions are also found farther east in the vicinity of the near-equatorial trough south of Chuuk within 60 miles of a line from 6N150E to 7N155E and south of Pohnpei between 3N and 5N from 156E to 161E. A trade-wind disturbance is causing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms over Majuro between 3N and 8N from 165E to 180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:31 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.7 Feet
8:30 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet
1:56 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
7:02 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:14 PM
Sunday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Monday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Tuesday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:16 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:16 PM	6:25 AM
Sunday	7:20 PM	7:16 AM
Monday	8:20 PM	8:03 AM
Tuesday	9:19 PM	8:47 AM
Wednesday	10:16 PM	9:30 AM

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  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 28, 2010

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW287	6:00am	7:30pm	Daily via NRT
NW638	8:00am	10:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily
NW289	5:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

CA8282	3:15am	7:00am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/893	3:15pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM-PALAU
OZ606/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7 via ICN
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW288	12:05pm	1:35am+1	Daily via NRT effective Jan 25
NW277	8:30pm	1:00am+1	3, 6
NW639	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW290	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW298	10:05am	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

CA8281	6:40pm	1:55am+1	4, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ716/605	12:30am	2:20pm	4, 6 via ICN
OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4 ,6 ,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CA: China Airlines; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio
Sunday
9am Sunday school
10am Regular worship
6pm worship
Wednesday
7pm worship
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 30, 2001

MOU ratifies presence of US ships
Commonwealth and US officials formally sealed a Memorandum of Understanding yesterday, reaffirming an agreement between local and federal governments to sustain the presence of naval pre-positioned ships at the Saipan lagoon. Governor Pedro P. Tenorio, Lt. Gov. Jesus R. Sablan, Ports Authority Board Chair Roman S. Palacios, and US Navy Commander Tom Fellin have affixed their signatures to the MOU, setting renewed cooperation efforts that allow US naval ships to anchor on CNMI waters for military purposes. Aside from accommodating the US vessels' presence on CNMI seas in exchange for military protection, the agreement also calls for both camps to collaborate on coastal and environmental concerns that may arise.

Continental named 'Airline of the Year'
The Air Transport World Magazine has named Continental Airlines as "Airline of the Year," the second time it received the recognition in five years. In 1996, Continental also bagged the honors awarded by the aviation industry's leading monthly trade publication, citing the airline's "employee-friendly culture." "It is no accident that Continental has the best labor relations of any US major hub-and-spoke carrier," the magazine noted. "Continental has defied the odds and continues to excel in every aspect of the business. Small wonder that other airlines have had to pull seats out of their planes to compete with Continental, which continues to generate a unit revenue premium versus the industry," said the magazine on its February issue.

Jan. 30, 2002

$193-M budget predicted in '99
Three years ago, in 1999, the Department of Finance had projected that General Fund revenues would plunge to $193 million. No surprises there. The CNMI Fiscal Outlook report prepared by the Office of the Governor said as much when it projected the Fiscal Year 2001-2002 revenues to descend to that level. The irony, however, is that the finance department was expecting the revenue plunge to happen in 2004, when the garment sector leaves the CNMI in the wake of the worldwide implementation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. This means the revenue plunge came a moment too soon. Two years too soon, and largely brought on by cataclysmic forces happening beyond the shores and the control of the Commonwealth.

Solar eclipse as MVA come-on
The Marianas Visitors Authority has started sending out flyers and promotional materials to its key offices abroad to lure tourists to visit the Northern Marianas in June this year to witness a rare Annular Solar Eclipse. The Annular Solar Eclipse can be seen from Saipan, Tinian and Rota on June 11 around 8:10am, when the moon's antumbral shadow reaches the southern end of the Northern Mariana Islands chain at 10:10pm on June 10 Universal Time. An annular solar eclipse is different from a total solar eclipse in that the Moon obscures 100 percent of the Sun's disc during a total solar eclipse. At an annular eclipse, a ring (or annulus) of sunlight is left uncovered and this surrounds the dark Moon.

Jan. 30, 2003

DPS crafting plans to protect tourists
Police Commissioner Edward Camacho disclosed plans to regulate tourist areas to deter the continued rise in crimes perpetrated against visitors. Camacho said a comprehensive plan is now being mapped out on effectively putting a stop to crimes against tourists, which noticeably occur in beach areas and other tourist spots. Also, the commissioner proposed a dual-task job for park personnel, who would be serving as security guards during open hours. "We are proposing that several areas be closed if there are no security guards on duty," said Camacho. He added that part of the plan is to fence off several tourist areas, rendering them off-limits unless during regulated schedules.

DLNR loosens embargo on chicken imports
More than three months after banning the entry of birds and poultry coming from the U.S. mainland due to the West Nile virus scare, the Department of Lands and Natural Resources modified the emergency regulation to allow the entry of chickens over four weeks old into the CNMI. Before this, DLNR Secretary Tom Pangelinan declared that only hatched chicken eggs and day-old chicks could enter the Commonwealth. The embargo does not apply to birds and poultry originating from Guam, except when the virus is actually detected.

Business

US economy likely grew faster in 4Q, but fears remain

WASHINGTON (AP)—At the end of last year, the economy likely grew for the second straight quarter—possibly at the fastest pace in nearly four years.

So the recession has ended, right? Yes, say most economists. But a panel of academics who officially decide such matters has offered a different response: silence.

That's despite signs that the economy, juiced by government aid, has begun to hum rather than sputter. On Friday, the government is likely to go further: it's expected to say growth accelerated from October through December.

The housing market, the collapse of which triggered the recession, is creeping back. Industrial production is up. Layoffs have slowed, though companies remain reluctant to hire.

Analysts surveyed by Thomson Reuters estimate the economy grew 4.5 percent in the final three months of 2009. If so, it would mark the best quarterly performance since 2006. Some predict even more dynamic growth—possibly hitting 6 percent, a level not reached since 2003.

But many analysts worry that growth could slow or even stop in coming months. They point to temporary factors that propped up the economy in the fourth quarter but will eventually fade.

Much of the fourth-quarter expansion was due to government stimulus and to companies boosting output to restock supplies depleted by the recession. Such inventory restocking boosts production not only at manufacturers but also at their suppliers. That ripple effect can help boost an entire chain of related industries.

Economists estimate two-thirds to three-quarters of the fourth quarter's growth came from the inventory cycle, as companies shifted from sharply cutting stockpiles to rebuilding them or only slightly reducing them.

An increase in inventories, or even just a much slower rate of decline, means companies are producing more goods to fill orders and not shrinking their existing stockpiles.

But government stimulus will eventually be withdrawn. Inventory replacement, too, ends, unless demand picks up. And when it ends, so will the production gains that companies and their suppliers enjoy.

For now, the swing is benefiting companies large and small, up and down the supply chain. AK Steel Holding Corp. said this week that greater demand for steel from automakers and other customers drove a better-than-expected fourth quarter profit.

That's why few think the expansion seen in the fourth quarter can last. Some even fear the recovery might collapse into a "double-dip" recession.

In the meantime, the National Bureau of Economic Research, the group based in Cambridge, Mass., that determines the start and end of recessions, has said nothing about the latest one having ended.

Many economists predict growth will slow to a pace of around 2.5 percent in the current quarter. High unemployment is likely to make consumers cautious, leading to subdued spending in the months ahead.

"The all-important consumer is expected to take a pause," predicts Tom Porcelli, economist at RBC Capital Markets Corp.

Japan urges Toyota to secure confidence of vehicle buyers

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's trade minister is urging Toyota Motor Corp. to secure the confidence of car buyers in the wake of massive global recalls.

"The scale of the recalls is huge. The situation is serious. It points to the possible dangers a global economy can bring," Trade Minister Masayuki Naoshima told reporters Friday.

"I would like Toyota to respond properly to secure consumer confidence."

Toyota—the world's largest automaker—has recalled 7.65 million vehicles in the U.S. over problems with gas pedals and floor mats. It recalled 75,500 vehicles in China for the same acceleration pedal problem.

The auto giant also said it would recall vehicles in Europe due to the accelerator problem, but said the number of recalled vehicles has yet to be determined.

Nation

Obama pleads for civility, cooperation in politics

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Trying to bury a year of polarization, President Barack Obama on Thursday escalated his appeal for politicians and voters alike to settle differences without tearing each other apart. His plea: "Let's start thinking of each other as Americans first."

Obama made sure to weave that message throughout his stop in Florida, one otherwise intended to promote his economic agenda by announcing $8 billion in high-speed rail awards.

Coming one day after his State of the Union address, and one day before meeting with House Republican leaders with whom he continues to battle, Obama's emphasis on civility was a nod to political reality. He needs Republicans more than ever to get his agenda passed, and he is getting saddled with more public blame for the partisanship he promised to change.

"Nothing that human beings do will be perfect," Obama, accompanied by Vice President Joe Biden, said as he capped a town hall at the University of Tampa, where he was received with boisterous support.

"But we shouldn't sort of assume that the other side is either heartless or doesn't care about sick people or is some socialist/communist who's trying to take over the health care system," the president said. "We start getting into these caricatures. They're so damaging."

Just how far to go in working with Republicans has been an evolving calculation for the White House. Obama ended up muscling through a giant economic stimulus plan with little help from the opposition party and was poised to do the same on major health care legislation until Democrats lost the super-majority they need—60 votes—to overcome delays in the Senate.

AP

President Barack Obama speaks at a town hall style meeting at the University of Tampa's Bob Martinez Sports Center in Tampa, Fla., the day after his State of the Union speech, Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010.

Obama takes responsibility, but not blame.

He still casts Republicans as a party of "no" and calls that their political strategy.

"I want the Republicans off the sidelines. I want them to work with us to solve problems," Obama said. And then he added: "I don't want an attitude `If Obama loses, then we win.' I mean, that can't be a platform. ... All of us should be rooting for each other."

Party divisions arise less over goals —the main one for both parties is jobs —then how to achieve them. Those policy discussions are even more difficult in this midterm election year, when leaders weigh what's better: working together or targeting the other for defeat.

Obama's challenge is to pull together enough unity to get results this year on weighty items—economic growth, Wall Street regulation, energy and the embattled health care. A Gallup Poll has found him to be the most politically polarizing president in recent history.

He has also acknowledged a problem in connecting with people, one that left them with a "remoteness and detachment" as he pursued a policy agenda meant to help the middle class. In turn, Obama has focused his rhetoric lately on making clear he is out fighting for people.

Senate Dem: Health care bill 'on life support'

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama's health care appeal failed to break the congressional gridlock Thursday, dimming hopes for millions of uninsured Americans. Democrats stared down a political nightmare—getting clobbered for voting last year for ambitious, politically risky bills, yet having nothing to show for it in November.

The grim reality opened a divide between the rank and file and congressional leaders, who insisted health care would get done, even though last week's special election in Massachusetts denied Democrats the 60-vote majority they need to deliver in the Senate. Many Democrats saw a problem with no clear solution.

"It's very possible that health care is just a stalemate and you can't solve it this year," said Sen. Mark Pryor, D-Ark.

If Obama and Democrats fail to pass any legislation this election year, Washington would still face the problem of millions of uninsured, rising medical costs and a dwindling Medicare trust fund forecast to run out of money in 2017.

Obama's health care overhaul is "on life support," said Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., "but it still has a pulse."

Obama urged lawmakers in Wednesday night's State of the Union address not to abandon the effort on what was once his top domestic priority. But his enthusiastic words provided no specific prescription for moving forward, leaving lawmakers little better off than before.

Ice, snow chill southern Plains amid power outages

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—A powerful storm dumped snow, sleet and freezing rain on the southern Plains Thursday, disrupting power to thousands of homes and businesses, canceling flights and shutting down major highways across three states.

The National Weather Service issued winter storm warnings through Friday for much of Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle.

Ice accumulations of more than one-half inch and high winds snapped electrical lines across Oklahoma, knocking out electrical power to tens of thousands of customers.

"In some places, as far you can see there are hundreds of utility poles on the ground," said Andrea Chancellor, spokeswoman for Public Service Company of Oklahoma.

"It could be five days for all customers who can take power to get power restored," she said.

AP

A Stillwater, Okla. Firefighter walks around a rolled over Chevy pickup truck on the southbound side of Interstate 35 at the Oklahoma Highway 51 interchange on Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010.

Airlines canceled more than 100 flights at Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City over concerns about icing on aircraft, spokeswoman Karen Carney said. She said additional flights will likely be canceled Friday morning.

Another 35 flights were canceled at Tulsa International Airport, said Alexis Higgins of the Tulsa Airport Authority.

Many flights in and out of Lubbock, Amarillo and Wichita Falls airports in Texas were canceled.

Officials voice opposition to 9/11 trials in NYC

NEW YORK (AP)—Opposition to the government's plans to hold the Sept. 11 terrorist trial in New York City intensified Thursday, one day after Mayor Michael Bloomberg revealed he had changed his mind and now hoped the trial would be held elsewhere.

Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y., said he has introduced a bill that would prohibit the use of Justice Department funds to try Guantanamo detainees in federal civilian courts. Hours later, New York Gov. David Paterson said he wants discussion with federal officials on the issue of venue.

Last month, the Obama administration announced that professed Sept. 11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and four others would be tried in federal court in lower Manhattan.

The New York congressman called it "one of the worst decisions ever made by any president," and said terrorist suspects should be tried by military commissions.

Bloomberg said he called Attorney General Eric Holder on Thursday to lobby for moving the trial outside lower Manhattan.

They spoke Thursday afternoon; both sides declined to comment afterward.

Bloomberg initially supported the Manhattan trial decision, declaring: "It is fitting that 9/11 suspects face justice near the World Trade Center site, where so many New Yorkers were murdered."

But the mayor this week reversed from what he said in November, when the Obama administration announced its plans.

"There are places that would be less expensive for the taxpayers and less disruptive for New York City," Bloomberg said Thursday.

In addition, six senators on Tuesday wrote to Holder and urged him to abandon the idea.

ACROSS THE NATION

No manslaughter defense in abortion doc's slaying

WICHITA, Kan. (AP)—The judge in the trial of a man accused of murdering an abortion doctor dealt the defense a major setback Thursday, ruling that the jury cannot consider a lesser charge of manslaughter. The ruling came hours after Scott Roeder took the stand in his own defense and admitted killing Dr. George Tiller, saying he acted to save the lives of unborn children. Roeder's attorneys had hoped to win a lesser conviction of voluntary manslaughter, which requires them to show their client had an unreasonable but honest belief that deadly force was justified. The charge carries a considerably lighter sentence than murder.

Pilot considered the only ace Tuskegee Airman dies

NEW YORK (AP)—Retired Air Force Lt. Colonel Lee A. Archer, a Tuskegee Airman considered to be the only black ace pilot who also broke racial barriers as an executive at a major U.S. company and founder of a venture capital firm, died Wednesday in New York City. He was 90. His son, Roy Archer, said his father died at Cornell University Medical Center in Manhattan. A cause of death was not immediately determined. The Tuskegee Airmen were America's first black fighter pilot group in World War II.

Girl's visit with accused abductor violated order

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—The father of a 7-year-old Oklahoma girl believed to have been abducted by her slain mother's estranged husband violated a court order when he let the child make an unsupervised visit with the woman, an attorney said Thursday. Aja Johnson has been missing since her mother, Tonya Hobbs, 35, was found slain in Geronimo on Sunday. Police believe she was taken by Lester Hobbs, 46, after his estranged wife brought the girl for a visit Saturday. Hobbs has been charged with first-degree murder and kidnapping. A Dec. 4 court order prohibited Tonya Hobbs from being alone with the girl and said the child could not be near Lester Hobbs, an ex-convict. But a lawyer for the girl's father, John J. Johnson of Oklahoma City, told The Associated Press that Johnson let Tonya Hobbs take Aja to a birthday party last Friday.

Asia

Japan PM vows to settle US base dispute by May

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama pledged Friday to decide by May on where to relocate a U.S. Marine base on the southern island of Okinawa that has strained ties between the nations, saying their security alliance remains indispensable.

"We will find what's best to keep our alliance with the U.S. as a cornerstone of peace in Japan and Asia, while reducing the burden of the Okinawan people," Hatoyama said.

Hatoyama, mapping out his key goals in a policy speech in parliament, said an "unshakable" alliance with the U.S. is crucial in deepening Japan's ties with Asia under his proposed plan to establish an East Asian community. Strengthening economic ties with other Asian countries is key to Japan's future growth, and such a community should include the U.S., he said.

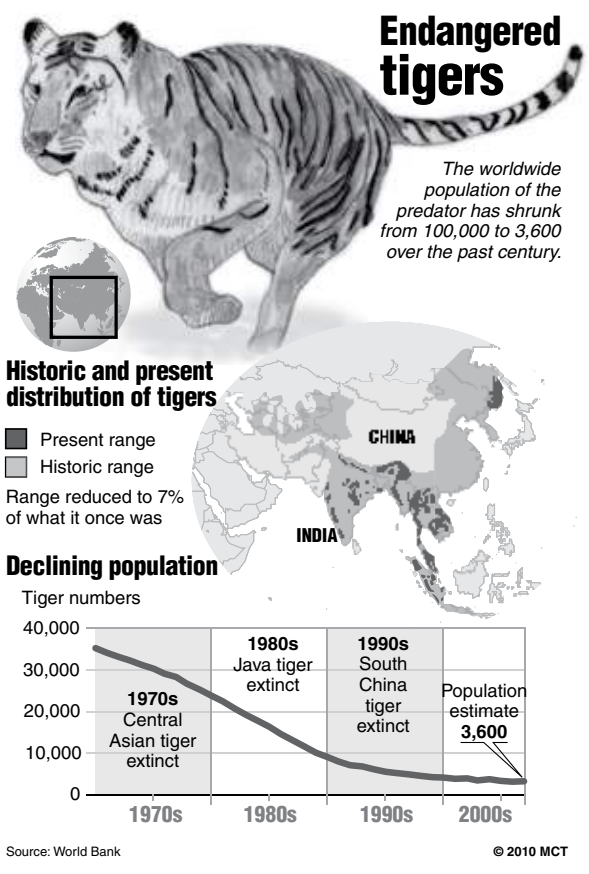
The alliance "has served an indispensable role" for Japan and for regional and global peace, he said. "Its importance will not be changed."

He said he would decide by the end of May on a new site for the U.S. Marine Airfield Futenma. More than half of the 47,000 U.S. troops stationed in Japan under a 1960 security treaty are on Okinawa, where residents have complained for years about noise, pollution and crime around the bases.

13 countries craft plan to save tigers

HUA HIN, Thailand (AP)—More than a dozen Asian nations aim to double the numbers of wild tigers by 2022 and prohibit the building of roads, bridges and other infrastructure projects that could harm their habitats.

However, a draft declaration that was to be adopted by the 13 countries Friday includes no new money to finance the conservation efforts which scientists said must be more than doubled. The draft, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press, mentions only a commitment from countries to use money from ecotourism, carbon financing and infrastructure projects to pay for tiger programs.



"With political will and implementation of the needed action, the extinction of the wild tigers across much of their range can be averted," the declaration states. "Tiger conservation is important to protect biodiversity and preserve a vital part of our national heritage."

Officials at the first Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation, in Thai coastal resort of Hua Hin, were to adopt the declaration Friday. It will then be considered for approval by heads of state of the 13 countries in September at a meeting in Vladivostok, Russia.

Tiger numbers in recent decades have plummeted because of human encroachment—with the loss of more than nine-tenths of their habitat—and poaching to supply a vibrant trade in tiger parts. From an estimated 100,000 at the beginning of the 20th century, the number of tigers today is less than 3,500.

Malaysia charges 3 Muslims for church firebombing

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Malaysian prosecutors charged three Muslim men Friday in the firebombing of a church—the first suspects in a string of assaults on places of worship amid a dispute over whether non-Muslims can refer to God as "Allah."

Arson attacks, vandalism and other incidents at 11 churches, a Sikh temple, three mosques and two Muslim prayer halls in recent weeks have been a blow to decades of multiracial harmony in this Muslim-majority country.

The attacks, which started on churches, followed anger among Muslims over a Dec. 31 court verdict that allowed non-Muslims to use "Allah" as a translation for "God" in the Malay language. Many Malaysian Muslims believe the word should be exclusive to their religion, and that its use by others could confuse some Muslims and even tempt them to convert.

Three suspects pleaded innocent in a Kuala Lumpur district court Friday to starting a fire that partially gutted a Protestant church on Jan. 8, said government lawyer Anselm Charles Fernandis. It was the first and most serious of all the attacks on churches, most of which suffered only minor damage.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Afghanistan: Fighting breaks out in southern city

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—A security official says a gunbattle has broken out between militants wearing suicide vests and security forces in a major city in southern Afghanistan. An official with the counterterrorism department says security forces have trapped five militants on top of a building that is under construction in Lashkar Gah, capital of Helmand province. Almas, who like many Afghans goes by one name, says two people have been killed, including one of the attackers and a civilian who was passing by when Friday's fighting began. But deputy provincial police chief Kamal Uddin says there were no casualties. The conflicting reports could not immediately be reconciled.

Vietnam crackdown continues as dissident on trial

HANOI, Vietnam (AP)—An author and democracy activist who criticized Vietnam's communist government went on trial Friday on charges of spreading propaganda against the state, as authorities continued their crackdown on dissent. Pham Thanh Nghien's trial in the northern port city of Haiphong was closed to Western media and diplomats, who are ordinarily allowed to watch such proceedings on closed-circuit TV at the courthouse. Nghien, 32, was the 14th Vietnamese democracy activist to face charges in the last three months. All the others were quickly tried, convicted and jailed.

World

Palestinians irate over new Jerusalem tram

JERUSALEM (AP)—Jerusalem's first light rail starts test runs this spring, with its sleek silver cars gliding across the city and promising to relieve the perpetual congestion.

But Palestinians see no reason to celebrate.

They hope to derail the $1 billion tram because they fear it will further entrench Israeli control over east Jerusalem, the part of the city they want as a capital. They've asked a French court to force two French multinationals, Veolia and Alstom, out of the project and are urging Arab countries to cancel contracts with the two companies.

The 9-mile (14-kilometer) line runs from Jewish west Jerusalem to the largest of several settlements Israel built in the traditionally Arab eastern sector after capturing it in 1967.

Palestinians say Israel is creating more facts on the ground with the tram, just as it has with its ever-expanding Jewish enclaves in east Jerusalem that are now home to 180,000 Israelis.

"The purpose of this project is to make a bridge between the settlements ... and west Jerusalem and they use our land, Palestinian land," said Ahmed Rweidi, an adviser to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. "The train is illegal and the settlements are illegal."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says he's not willing to give up any part of Jerusalem, taking a harder line than some of his predecessors, and insists Israel has the right to build anywhere in the city.

Government spokesman Mark Regev said "the light rail will serve all of Jerusalem's residents and beyond, Arab and Jew alike."

Mother of rescued quake girl never gave up hope

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—She is amazing her doctors, the 16-year-old choir girl who came close to dying but wouldn't in the crumbled concrete graveyard of Port-au-Prince.

More than two weeks after the earthquake brought down her school—and a day after she was lifted from the ruins—Darlene Etienne was eating yogurt, talking and regaining her strength Thursday.

"We are very surprised at the fact that she is still alive," said Dr. Evelyne Lambert, who is caring for her on a French hospital ship offshore. One who didn't seem surprised was the girl's mother, a poor rice-and-vegetable peddler.

"I never thought she was dead," Kerline Dorcant, 39, told The Associated Press. "I always thought she was alive."

Why?

"It's God" hearing a mother's nonstop prayers, she said.

Added Darlene's younger brother, Preslin: "I think she has a special God."

The astonishing rescue of the high school student, by a French search team that refused to go home when others did, offered a moment of joy in this grieving city, where uncounted thousands were entombed in a landscape of broken and heaped-up concrete, wood and metal.

They're among an estimated 200,000 quake dead in Haiti, including 150,000 who Haitian officials say have been buried anonymously in mass graves.

Hundreds airlifted from Peru site when skies clear

MACHU PICCHU PUEBLO, Peru (AP)—Skies cleared over the fabled Machu Picchu citadel Thursday, speeding the evacuation of thousands of stranded tourists, many of whom were left to eat from communal pots and sleep outdoors after flooding and mudslides cut access to the area.

Helicopters had taken 700 people by mid-afternoon from the remote village, the closest to the ancient Inca ruins 8,000 feet up in the Andes mountains.

About 2,000 travelers were trapped in the town for days, strapping resources and testing travelers' patience.

"It's been an adventure, a bit more than we bargained for," Karel Schultz, 46, of Niagara Falls, N.Y., told the Associated Press as she waited to be airlifted out.

Authorities say if the weather holds, they may be able to have all tourists out by Saturday. The Machu Picchu site is closed and will remain so for weeks until the government can repair highway and railroad tracks washed out by mudslides and the raging Urubamba River.

Dozens of ragged-looking, middle-aged tourists lined up outside the train station, where they waited to make the walk of a few hundred yards to a makeshift helicopter clearing. Younger backpackers played soccer with locals and lent a hand stacking sandbags and clearing train tracks to pass the time.

WORLD BRIEFS

Hamas: Israel assassinated operative in Dubai

JERUSALEM (AP)—The Palestinian militant group Hamas says Israel has assassinated one of its veteran operatives in a killing carried out in the Gulf city of Dubai. An announcement on a Hamas Web site says Mahmoud al-Mabhouh was killed on January 20. The statement, posted on the Palestinian Information Center site, says Hamas holds Israel responsible for the "criminal assassination." It gives no details of the man's death. Israeli government spokesman David Baker would not comment.

Clinton: Iran leaves penalties as only choice

LONDON (AP)—Iran leaves the world no recourse but to apply penalties aimed at curbing a fast-track nuclear program, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Thursday. In London ostensibly for conferences on Afghanistan and Yemen, Clinton has devoted significant time to Iran ahead of a U.S.-led sanctions push at the United Nations expected by the end of the week. Her discussions here are intended to win support from countries whose backing the United States and its allies need to win and enforce new U.N. sanctions. "Our efforts to apply pressure on Iran are not meant to punish the Iranian people. They are meant to change the approach the Iranian government has taken toward its nuclear program," Clinton said.

Dog drifts 75 miles on ice, rescued in Baltic Sea

WARSAW, Poland (AP)—A frightened, shivering dog was rescued after floating at least 75 miles (120 kilometers) on an ice floe down Poland's Vistula River and into the Baltic Sea, officials said Thursday. Now his saviors just have to figure out who really owns him.

Four people have already claimed him, but so far rescuers say there's been no wagging tail of joy from the miracle dog they nicknamed "Baltic." The dog's frozen odyssey came as Poland suffers through a winter cold snap, with temperatures dipping to below minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 20 Celsius). The thick-furred male dog was found adrift Monday 15 miles (24 kilometers) out in the Baltic Sea by the crew of the Baltica, a Polish ship of ocean scientists carrying out research.

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, January 30, 2010

Overseas voters may have to go manual

By JEROME ANING
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Filipino voters overseas may still have to resort to manual voting after some host countries indicated they were not keen on having large crowds assemble in one place.

Commission on Elections (Comelec) Chairman Jose Melo told reporters in an interview Monday that "our ambassadors have communicated with us, with the foreign affairs department, that some host countries prefer manual [voting]."

Melo said some host countries did not want too many people trooping to the Philippines diplomatic outposts in their jurisdictions and forming long queues.

The Precinct Count Optical Scan machines that will be used in the Philippines for the first time will also be used in the overseas voting. This would require voters to personally appear at Philippine embassies, consulates, and other government offices abroad.

"Since they don't want too many people they are backing out of automation. We have to consider the feelings and sentiments of the host country," Melo said.

Comelec education and information department director James Arthur Jimenez had earlier said automated voting could be conducted in places where there are many Filipinos such as Hong Kong, Singapore, and Saudi Arabia.

Melo declined to identify the countries that disapproved of having large gatherings in one place. Some countries forbid unauthorized public gatherings while some have strict regulations governing assemblies.

In such countries, he said, the Comelec would have no choice but to resort to the manual system, which is voting by mail.

All registered overseas absentee voters will be sent ballots through the mail and they could start sending them back beginning April 10, a full month before the elections in the Philippines.

Two Filipinas remain missing in Haiti

By KATHERINE EVANGELISTA
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Four more bodies were recovered from the rubble of a collapsed supermarket in quake-hit Haiti Monday evening but they did not belong to the missing Filipinas believed trapped in the establishment, the Philippine military said Tuesday.

In an interview, Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Romeo Brawner, Jr. said the new bodies found in the ruins of the Caribbean Supermarket belonged to Haiti nationals.

Grace Fabian and Geraldine Calican have remained missing since the massive 7.0 magnitude earthquake shook Haiti on January 12, killing around 150,000 and leaving around a million people homeless.

Earlier, rescuers found the bodies of four Filipino peacekeepers and a civilian UN volunteer at the collapsed UN headquarters in Port-au-Prince.

Nearly two weeks after the 7.0 magnitude earthquake and authorities have shifted from rescue to search and retrieval operations.

Brawner, citing a report of Lieutenant Colonel Lope Dagoy, Commander of the 10th Philippine Contingent to Haiti, said retrieval operations were ongoing.

"The recovery operations are now ongoing," he said.

Four bodies of other Filipino casualties have been recovered last week namely Data Processor 3 Perlie Panangui, Air Force Sergeant Janice Arocena and Army Sergeant Eustacio Bermudez, Jr., of the 10th Philippine Contingent to Haiti and UN civilian employee Jerome Yap.

The bodies of the three peacekeepers—Data Processor 3 Perlie Panangui, Air Force Sergeant Janice Arocena and Army Sergeant Eustacio Bermudez, Jr.—would be brought to the Philippines by Thursday.

Meanwhile, the US-based family of UN civilian employee Jerome Yap was still deciding where to bury his remains.

'PNP dysfunctions led to Maguindanao slays'

By ABIGAIL KWOK
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—There were "dysfunctions" within the organization of the Philippine National Police that could have led to the massacre in Maguindanao last November, PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa admitted Friday.

"We admit with all humility the various PNP dysfunctions that contributed to this incident and our resolve to correct these dysfunctions," Verzosa said in his speech during the 19th PNP Anniversary at Camp Crame, Quezon City.

Several police officers were reportedly involved in the massacre, where at least 30 journalists were killed.

But Verzosa quickly added that the PNP immediately took action to correct the organizational dysfunctions that were revealed following the massacre.

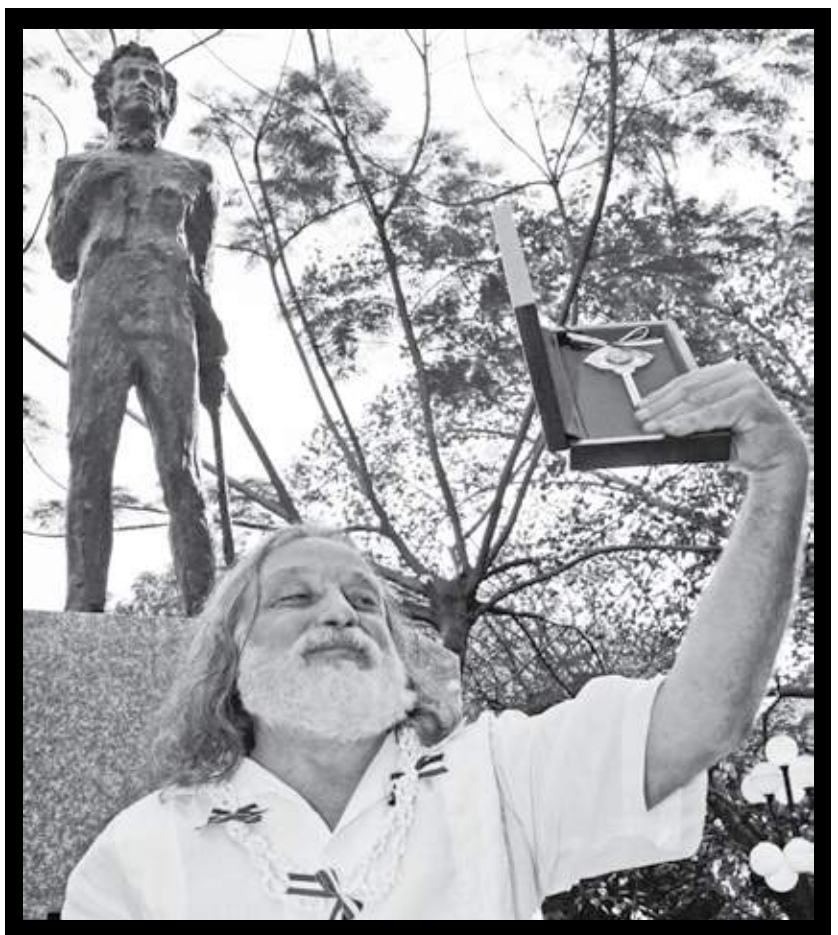
Some of the steps taken by the PNP, he said, included accounting of all personnel in the province as well as firearms, "as well as penalize errant policemen, particularly those involved, whether directly or indirectly, in the Maguindanao massacre."

The PNP leadership also relieved 1,092 policemen in Maguindanao and has filed multiple murder charges against those involved either directly or as accomplices, Verzosa added.

"The PNP continues to lend assistance and support to the solution of the case with the objective of finally bringing justice to the families and victims of the massacre and peace in Mindanao," Verzosa said.

Meanwhile, he also called on all police officials to act as "peace makers" among political leaders to ensure peace in the coming elections.

"Police commanders are also responsible in maintaining peace and order, especially in election watchlist areas. Election laws and the rule of law will be strictly implemented," Verzosa said.



KEY TO THE CITY AP

Russian sculptor Grigory Pototsky raises the symbolic key to the city presented to him after the unveiling of the statue of Alexander Pushkin, Russia's national poet and founder of modern literature Friday, Jan. 29, 2010 in Manila, Philippines. Pototsky, a member of the Union of Artists at UNESCO, donated the bronze statue to commemorate the establishment of the diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Russia.

2 bomb blasts rock Zamboanga City

Third one recovered and detonated by authorities

By ABIGAIL KWOK
INQUIRER.NET

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Two bombs exploded here early morning Friday while a third one was recovered and had been safely detonated by authorities, the police said.

There had been no report of any casualty in the latest bomb attacks that rocked this city, says Senior Superintendent Edwin de Ocampo, the city police chief.

De Ocampo said the explosions took place within an hour of each other – the first went off between Rizal Park and a school and the second in the Sevilla area—between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m., he said.

Chief Superintendent Jose Bayani Gucela, chief of the explosives and ordnance division of the Western Mindanao police, said no fragments were recovered from the blast sites.

But there were traces of ammonium nitrate, a type of compound normally used as fertilizer.

"The intention [of the bombers] is just to scare people," Gucela said.

In a separate interview with INQUIRER.net, Chief Superintendent Angelo Sunglao, Zamboanga peninsula regional director, said improvised explosive devices were reportedly placed inside a carton box.

Sunglao said that prior to the explosion, a text message was received by Mayor Celso Lobregat on alleged anomalies by an official from the Office of Muslim Affairs.

21-man RP medical team off to Haiti

By CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Noting that Filipinos are no strangers to natural disasters, like the earthquake that shattered Haiti, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo Monday sent off a 21-member medical team to assist in humanitarian efforts in the poor Caribbean nation.

"Our biggest contribution on top of a meager fund is the expertise of our doctors and nurses and we thank the volunteers who will go there," she said in Filipino in Malacañang.

The humanitarian team was scheduled to leave Monday night even as 70 Filipinos, mostly women and children, who were affected by the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti, headed for Manila starting Tuesday under a government repatriation program.

Ms Arroyo had earlier promised to give $50,000 cash assistance as part of an international effort to help Haiti's recovery. Coming from a poor country like the Philippines, the amount was understandably dwarfed by aid coming from the developed countries, such as the United States and France.

She said Filipinos knew the "feeling" of being at the receiving end of international aid in the face of calamities, including Tropical Storm "Ondoy," and Typhoons "Pepeng" and "Frank" that struck the Philippines last year.

"That's why it is our responsibility to send help whenever we have brothers and sisters elsewhere in the world who are in need," she said. "We felt the importance of help coming from other countries before; that's why we're doing the same now."

Her deputy spokesperson, Gary Olivar, said that "we benefited from the world's goodwill when we had disasters last year, so it's but proper that we return the favor with our openness [to help] when other nations like Haiti are in need,"

Headed by Dr. Emmanuel Bueno, the Philippine humanitarian team has general and orthopedic surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses, public health emergency specialists, sanitary engineers, an internal medicine specialist, a pediatrician, a psychologist and a social worker.

Another team, composed mostly of medical experts on post-traumatic cases, will leave for Haiti next week.

"We are going there to help. We have been ordered first and foremost to help the victims," Bueno, an anesthesiologist of East Avenue Medical Center, told reporters. "With us are medicines and equipment necessary for surgical operations … from gauze to antibiotics to anesthesia and anesthesia machine."

"We are not asking for anything in return, not even recognition. This is pure service," he said.

General, 8 others die in Cotabato air crash

Plane goes down two minutes after takeoff

By JULIE ALIPALA, NASH MAULANA, JEROME ANING
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

COTABATO CITY—"Power loss," the pilot radioed the control tower moments before the Nomad plane nosedived, missed a chapel and slammed into two houses in a residential area in Cotabato City.

All eight people aboard—including Philippine Air Force Maj. Gen. Mario "Butch" Lacson of the 3rd Air Division based in Zamboanga City—and a civilian on the ground were killed in the fiery crash at 11:37 a.m. Thursday, PAF officials said.

Two other civilians were injured on the ground.

Officials said the military plane plunged barely two minutes after taking off from the Cotabato Airport—more popularly called Awang airport—in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

The plane was decades old, having been acquired from Australia in 1975.

"As it took off, the plane suddenly nosedived and hit residential areas," Mayor Muslimin Sema, quoting witnesses, told reporters. "It was flying in a zigzag mode."

AP

Philippine Air Force rescue teams retrieve bodies of victims from the site after a twin-prop Nomad aircraft crashed Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010 at Cotabato city in southern Philippines, killing a senior air force commander and seven other people aboard, officials said.

Engulfed in flames

The plane was piloted by Capt. Genaro Gaylord Ordonio, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 2000, and 1Lt. Angelica Valdez of the PMA Class 2006.

Eyewitness Edgar Campos said he noticed the plane was flying very low. "I thought it will swerve toward the chapel, but it tilted toward the urban poor area, hit the roof of a house and exploded," Campos said, speaking in the vernacular.

The gray-colored plane was engulfed in flames, he said. The two houses it struck, located in a subdivision in Barangay Rosary Heights, caught fire.

The cause of the crash has not been determined but the military ruled out suggestions of any hostile ground fire.

Last report

Aside from Lacson, the other people listed in the manifest were the pilots Ordonio and Valdez and their five passengers, namely Maj. Prisco Tacuboy, Lt. Alexander Ian Lipait and Staff Sergeants Ronaldo Mejia, Ianne Christy Marose Llamera and Jeffrey Gozon, according to the PAF head in office in Villamor Air Base in Pasay City.

Loud explosion

Lacson, a graduate of PMA Class 1977, was a former chief of the Western Command and was once considered a contender for the top PAF post. He took over the 3rd Air Division, based at the Edwin Andrews Air Base in Zamboanga City, in June last year.

Moments before the crash, "the pilot made a call (to the Cotabato airport tower) and he said 'power loss,'" according to Maj. Gen. Carlix Donila, commander of the Davao-based 5053rd Search and Squadron.

Sema said based on witnesses' account, the plane appeared to be encountering "some trouble" and was trying to land again at the airport.

Irene Tuga, a sidewalk vendor, said she thought the plane was just gliding near one of the residential villages in the city village. "We normally see Air Force planes fly over the city," she said.

PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

Land mine blast wounds 7 Philippine army soldiers

MAKILALA, Philippines (AP)—Police say a land mine has exploded and wounded at least one army officer and six soldiers in the restive southern Philippines. Police Chief Inspector Jerson Birrey said Wednesday that it was not immediately clear who was behind the attack late Tuesday in the farming township of Makilala in North Cotabato. The area has been hit by deadly bombings blamed on al-Qaida-linked militants in recent years. Birrey said the soldiers had come from a basketball game and were heading back to camp when the land mine went off along a dirt road. Birrey said communist New People's Army guerrillas are also active in North Cotabato, a predominantly Christian province located near a Muslim autonomous region.

Philippines appeals to Kuwait to spare maid's life

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is pleading with Kuwait to spare the life of a Filipino housemaid, who was sentenced to death after a murder conviction. The Department of Foreign Affairs said that Arroyo has asked Vice President Noli de Castro to travel to Kuwait to intercede on behalf of Jakatia Pawa, who was convicted of stabbing to death her employer's daughter in 2007. The department says De Castro will deliver a letter of appeal from Arroyo to Kuwait's emir. About 10 million Filipinos—nearly 10 percent of the poor Southeast Asia nation's 90 million population—work abroad, sending home huge earnings that bolster the Philippine economy.

Driver in Ateneo student's death faces car theft rap

MANILA, Philippines—The woman accused of killing a 10-year-old Ateneo Grade School student last year has been charged with another offense. A balikbayan recently filed an affidavit with the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office in which she accused Ma. Theresa Songco Torres of stealing her van—the one the latter was driving when she ran over Juan Carlo Miguel "Amiel" Alcantara. Alcantara was crossing the school parking lot with his siblings and nanny when he was hit by the van on Feb. 24, 2009. His nanny was injured while the boy was declared dead on arrival at a nearby hospital due to head injuries. Torres was later charged with reckless imprudence resulting in homicide and physical injures before a Quezon City court over Alcantara's death. The case is still pending. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

'Mangudadatu warned about Ampatuans'

By CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—There was nothing Malacañang could have done beyond warning Vice Mayor Esmael "Toto" Mangudadatu of the violent nature of a political clan that used to enjoy its friendship.

Gary Olivar, a deputy spokesperson of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Thursday said as much in reacting to Mangudadatu's emotional court testimony on Wednesday that Malacañang had failed to blunt the Ampatuan clan's known propensity for violence.

It was apparently Mangudadatu's resolve to run for governor of Maguindanao along with Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr. that triggered the Nov. 23 massacre of 57 civilians, including the vice mayor's wife, two sisters and an aunt, and at least 30 journalists and media workers.

Ampatuan Jr. is the primary suspect in the Maguindanao massacre.

"In terms of fair warning and due notice, it seems that we were not negligent," Olivar told reporters, noting that no less than then Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro had cautioned Mangudadatu against contesting the governorship.

"I'm not sure what else ought to have been done," Olivar said.

He added: "At the end of the day, it was the decision of the candidate if he would proceed with his candidacy based on the information he had received."

Not exactly law-breaking

Asked what could have been Mangudadatu's motive in partly blaming the Palace for the massacre, Olivar only said: "My instinct is to respect the vice mayor in his grief, to respect his motives for saying what he feels he has to say.

"Let us give him the appropriate sympathy and support in his current situation."

Olivar acknowledged that there might have been stories about the Ampatuan clan's propensity for violence. "[But] these kinds of notional evidence ... may not necessarily be linked to specific law-breaking incidents," he pointed out.

He said the stories might have been sufficient to prompt someone like Teodoro to warn Mangudadatu of the perils of running against the Ampatuans. But then, he said, the "behavior doesn't rise to the level of specific law-breaking."

"The only long-term solution to this kind of problem in Mindanao is to have a binding peace agreement among the warring parties, including the Philippine government," Olivar said.

"The important thing is to learn the lessons and pick up, move on and revise our behaviors based on the lessons," he said.

Daily death threats

Mangudadatu visited the Commission on Elections' main office in Manila Thursday afternoon to seek security.

He met with Commissioner Lucenito Tagle to request a revision of the security plan for him and members of his family who are running for reelection on May 10.

He said he and his family in Maguindanao had been receiving death threats daily.

Judge orders road rage suspect moved to QC jail

By NANCY C. CARVAJAL, TINA SANTOS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Road rage suspect Jason Ivler, who is facing murder charges for the death of a Malacañang official's son, will be transferred to the Quezon City jail as soon as he is well enough to be discharged from the hospital.

"In view of the arrest of the accused, Jason Ivler, the court orders his commitment to the Quezon City jail. However, cognizant of the public knowledge that said accused is presently undergoing medical treatment, the court defers such commitment pending [his] recovery," Judge Alexander S. Balut of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 76 said Wednesday in a one-page order.

At the same time, he directed Ivler's doctors to submit a report on his medical condition within five days "for the court's guidance in setting his arraignment," he added.

Dr. Fernando Lopez, chief surgeon of the Quirino Memorial Medical Center where Ivler is confined, told the Inquirer that they have already received a copy of the judge's order.

"We will comply with the court's order and submit a medical report as soon as possible," Lopez said in a phone interview.

Asked how soon Ivler can be released from the hospital, the doctor replied, "He is still in a guarded condition because of an infection. I cannot say how long he will stay [here]."'

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) earlier asked the court to order Ivler's transfer to the Quezon City jail instead of giving him to the bureau's custody once he is discharged from the hospital, citing security concerns.

"We also told the court that the NBI jail is already congested and that we already have in custody another high-profile subject," NBI Special Action Unit chief, lawyer Angelito Magno, said, referring to Andal Ampatuan Jr., the prime suspect in last year's Maguindanao massacre.

The NBI, however, will continue to secure Ivler while he remains confined at the hospital for the two gunshot wounds he sustained when he shot it out with agents who were out to arrest him for the death of Renato Victor Ebarle Jr. on Jan. 18.

Ivler is accused of shooting Ebarle dead during a traffic altercation in Quezon City on Nov. 18.

The NBI yesterday filed additional charges of direct assault complex with attempted and frustrated murder against Ivler in connection with the Jan. 18 shoot-out which left two NBI agents wounded.

His mother, Marlene Aguilar, was also charged as an accomplice for allegedly hiding him from lawmen.

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Philippine GDP grows at slowest pace in 11 years

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine economy grew at its slowest pace in 11 years in 2009 as the global economic crunch hit exports and investment, officials said Thursday.

Growth in gross domestic product faded to 0.9 percent in 2009 from 3.8 percent in 2008—the weakest since the economy shrank 0.6 percent in 1998 in the wake of the Asian financial crisis.

Last year's growth was still within the government's 0.8 percent to 1.8 percent target and shows the Philippine economy's resilience, said acting National Economic Planning Secretary Augusto Santos.

"More importantly, our economy has never entered into a recession despite the odds," Santos said. "Our economy has proven itself resilient, and elections will bring fresh mandates and new energy to our society. We are thus optimistic." Polls are slated for May.

The slow growth last year was largely due to poor performance across numerous sectors of the economy, said Romulo Virola, secretary general of the National Statistical Coordination Board.

Agriculture, fishery and forestry grew just 0.1 percent. Industry shrank 2 percent and growth in the services sector slowed to 3.2 percent from 3.3 percent.

Contributing to the "tepid rejuvenation" of the economy in the fourth quarter—despite the battering by two of the worst typhoons to whip the country in decades—was growth in retail sales, banking, recreational services and mining, Virola said. Manufacturing also began to recover.

Increased consumer and government spending compensated for decreased investments in durable equipment and the sustained decline in demand for Philippine exports from the country's major trading partners, he said.

In addition, about 9 million Filipinos working abroad helped boost the economy by sending home $25.9 billion, or an average of more than $2 billion in monthly remittances. That was a 15.6 percent increase over the previous year's $22.4 billion.

STATE OF THE UNION AP

A Filipino street vendor glances on television sets showing a live broadcast of U.S. President Barack Obama's State of the Union address from Washington D.C. at a shop selling imported second hand appliances in Manila, Philippines, Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010.

California 'governator' coming to RP

By CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Expect some "heavy lifting" in the post-"Ondoy" recovery efforts. For the "Governator" is coming.

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is expected to arrive in Manila on Feb. 7 to look into Philippine rebuilding efforts after the onslaughts of Storms Ondoy (international codename: Ketsana) and "Pepeng" (Parma) last year.

During his one-week stay, Schwarzenegger will visit areas devastated by the calamities, according to Butch Meily, executive director of the Philippine Disaster Recovery Foundation.

"We will be talking to him about the disaster recovery plan," Meily said. He said the governor would be accompanied by former California State Assembly Speaker Willie Brown and a group of Filipino-Americans.

'Heavy lifting'

President Macapagal-Arroyo's deputy spokesperson, Gary Olivar, joked that Schwarzenegger would "assist in heavy lifting." The actor-turned-politician is a former bodybuilding titlist who popularized the "Terminator" movie franchise before joining the Republican Party.

Meily said Schwarzenegger might also have an audience with the President, who earlier formed a private-public sector commission to facilitate recovery efforts.

The PDRF represents that private sector in the initiative, in partnership with the Special National Public Reconstruction Commission.

3-year rebuilding

In a media presentation at Malacañang Thursday, Ricardo Saludo, secretary general of the commission, said a total of P208 billion would be needed for the three-year rebuilding program.

Fifty-five percent of the budget or P114.5 billion will come from the government, while the remainder of P93.4 billion will be shouldered by the private sector.

This year alone, Saludo said, recovery efforts would need a total of $877.58 million to cover housing, agriculture, and flood control and other areas.

"We really need our taxpayers to come forward this year," he told reporters. We need to boost tax collection."

To ensure that recovery would remain on track, Saludo said the commission had asked the Commission on Elections to exempt its infrastructure projects from the election ban.

"We need to repair classrooms before school resumes and we need to restore irrigation facilities and distribute farm inputs for the wet season planting," he said in a statement.

For the first quarter of 2010, he said the commission earmarked a total of P9.15 billion, based on the "post-disaster needs assessment" (PDNA) prepared by the government in the aftermath of the twin typhoons.

Saludo said another P10.4 billion worth of projects would be lined for the next quarter.

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR MONEY

How new parents can save even with little money

Editor's Note: This is part of Take Charge of Your Money, a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: Hi, I really enjoyed reading your column last week on how we can save without even consciously doing so. I just gave birth to a beautiful daughter and my husband and I are reeling from all the expenses. Can you also share advice on how parents in particular can save? We would appreciate any tips you can share as it seems our disposable money is all going to disposable diapers!—Jo

Answer: Congratulations on your new baby! Having a new addition to the family is a joyous occasion. But it can also be expensive, as you have realized. Aside from diapers, there is preschool and way beyond that, college, to think about. Add to that the cost of raising a child (food, clothing, shelter, etcetera) up to age 21 or more and it is no wonder that parents get overwhelmed with expenses.

However, there are ways to cope with expenses and save. The good thing is that this early, you are already aware of the need to set aside money, not just to meet the needs of raising your child but also to meet your needs as well.

Here are our tips on how you can save:

1. Plan your family. How many children do you want to have? How many children can you afford to raise such that their needs are covered and they get a good education? As parents, it is your responsibility to provide for the needs of your children. If you want more than one child, plan to space them several years' apart so you can prepare your body, mind and finances for the arrival of each child.

2. Change your social activities. If, before becoming parents, you go out a lot as a couple or with friends, cut down on the frequency of such activities. Find other ways to spend time together without spending so much.

3. Cut down on brand name luxury items. This goes for everything, from shoes and bags to accessories and baby gear. Scout around and discover other brands that do not cost much yet are of good quality. Besides, your baby won't know the difference if her T-shirt sports a brand name or not.

4. Treat savings as a bill you have to pay monthly. Take at least 10 percent off your take-home pay from the top (before you spend anything) and commit to do this every payday. Deposit it in a high-yielding savings account you won't touch. This will be the start of your emergency fund.

5. Shop wisely. Buy diapers in bulk to get discounts. Go to warehouse clubs or canvas among supermarkets near you where you can get your groceries at cheaper prices. Buy needs first, before wants. Stop yourself from impulse buying, or buying something you don't really need.

6. Have a budget and stick to it. A budget should be a must in every family, and more so when you have children depending on you. It's a spending plan that will help you prioritize expenses and watch your spending so you don't go overboard.

7. Take out life insurance. Now why is this a way to save, you may ask—isn't this another expense? Having life insurance coverage will help your surviving spouse (in case you pass away first) and your daughter to handle the resulting financial burden. So in a way, this is saving for the future. Plus, buying insurance at a younger age will cost cheaper with lower premiums.

8. Draft a strategy to save for your child's education. Some people prefer saving via educational plans. They say having a bill from the preneed company due every month forces them to save. Others prefer to save on their own regularly through investments in time deposits or bonds or mutual funds and investment trust funds. Whatever way you choose, start even if your child is still a baby. Compound interest will help roll over your fund and make it bigger.

In the meantime, enjoy your daughter and we wish you and your family a secure financial future.

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Philippines accuses rebels of massive extortion

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Communist guerrillas in the Philippines have collected more than 1 billion pesos ($22 million) through extortion in the past 13 years and plan to squeeze more money from candidates ahead of general elections this spring, the military said.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has ordered the 120,000-strong Philippine military to defeat the 40-year-old Maoist insurgency by the end of her term in June.

About 48 million Filipinos will vote for a new president, senators, congressmen and thousands of officials down to the village level on May 10. Past elections in the Southeast Asian democracy have been marred by bloodshed and fraud.

Documents seized from captured guerrillas show they plan to extort money and firearms from candidates in exchange for protection from rebel attacks, as well as help in gaining support in the countryside, military civil relations service commander Brig. Gen. Francisco Cruz said in a statement.

He said such demands are preposterous because the rebels do not control any territory or voters.

Candidates should immediately report any extortion demands from the 5,000-strong New People's Army rebels because giving them funds or guns would bolster their waning movement, Cruz said.

"This is their moneymaking season," he said. "Extortion is what's keeping them alive, not their ideology."

Maoist guerrillas have also attempted to extort money from a company contracted by the elections commission to supply automated voting machines nationwide, Cruz said.

Efforts to reach the rebels for comment were unsuccessful.

Since 1996, the rebels have extorted more than 1 billion pesos from construction, mining, telecommunications, transportation and logging companies, as well as from farmers, Cruz said, citing revelations by captured guerrillas.

Refusing to pay up can expose companies to rebel attacks, Cruz said. Earlier this month, communist guerrillas destroyed banana saplings and a backhoe on a foreign-owned plantation in southern Surigao del Sur province after the company refused to yield to rebel extortion, he said.

Peace talks between the rebels and the government brokered by Norway collapsed in 2004 after the guerrillas blamed the government for their inclusion on U.S. and European lists of terrorist groups. Both sides have taken steps to resume the talks, but the efforts have been unsuccessful.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Roxas now a 'Regal baby'

By MAILA AGER
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Sen. Manual "Mar" Roxas II now calls himself a "Regal baby."

Roxas gave this title to himself after receiving the public endorsement Wednesday night from one of the biggest movie producers in the country and Regal films matriarch, Mother Lily Monteverde.

Sen. Manual "Mar" Roxas II

"Ako'y nagpapasalamat kay Mother Lily. Biro mo, eh talagang out of the blue, hindi ko naman inaasahan; hindi ko naman siya talagang kilalang masyado at nagpaabot siya na 'Mar alam mo, pinag-aralan ko yung pagkatao mo at lahat,' pina feng shui daw nya lahat at sabi nga nya susuporta ako sayo, (I am grateful to Mother Lily. Imagine, it's really out of the blue and I wasn't expecting it. I don't really know her that well and yet she told me, 'You know Mar, I studied your personality,' she even asked a Feng Shui expert and she told me she supported me)," the senator told reporters on Thursday.

"Nagpapasalamat ako kay Mother Lily na isang Regal baby na din ako (I am thankful to Mother Lily that I am now a Regal baby)," said Roxas, who is running for vice president in the May elections.

But the senator's closest rival, Senator Loren Legarda, was unfazed by Monteverde's endorsement of Roxas, saying that "deep in her (Monteverde) heart, alam nya kung sino ang mahal nya."

Legarda said Monteverde called her last week and informed her that she was arranging a press conference for Roxas.

"And I said, 'ok lang Mother.' ('It's okay, Mother') Alam nyo, ang pagkakaibigan namin ni Mother goes beyond politics (My friendship with Mother goes beyond politics). Openly, in many elections, palagi niya ako binibigyan ng presscon (Openly, in many elections, she always gives me a presscon). Hanggang ngayon ay tinutulungan pa rin ako in many more ways than one (Until now she still helps me in many more ways than one). More than a press con," she told a regular forum in the Senate.

"Deep in her heart, alam nya kung sino ang mahal nya (she knows who she loves)," Legarda said, "Alam nyo sa panahon ng pulitika, yung mga endorsement may be political but friendships and relationships go beyond political endorsement (You know, during election period, the endorsements may be political but friendships and relationships go beyond political endorsement)."

Legarda said Monteverde "continues to be a good friend, and as a mother, she treats me like her own daughter."

Jomari Yllana loveless on V-Day

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

I teased Jomari Yllana. "Plano mo bang kabugin the concert of Martin and your ex, Pops, that's why you will also have a Valentine's Day show with Kuh Ledesma and Christopher de Leon?"

He laughed. "Di naman," he said. "I'll just be a guest in 'Forever Love' at the Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental on Feb. 12 and 14. I love to sing and I can't say no to Kuh. My fave love song is U2's 'All I Want Is You.' Buti na lang I said yes kasi wala akong Valentine date."

I shot back. "I find that hard to believe. Maybe you just can't make up your mind who to date on V-day!"

He retorted, "I've been happily single for a year na. I haven't been dating. I'm not looking. Pero kung sino man siya, sana mahanap na niya ako (laughs)."

■ ■ ■ ■

John Estrada was the picture of an "ulirang ama" when he hosted a lavish luau debut party for his daughter Inah at the Wack Wack Golf & Country Club poolside. The debutante's mom, Janice de Belen, was missing in action because she had work. Any mom would feel bad to miss a milestone in her kid's life. But I'm sure Kumareng Janice will make up for it big time.

"I invited Janice," John said. "I was kinda sad that she couldn't make it."

Or was she just avoiding to see John since she has unresolved issues with him? Whatever it is, the important thing is Janice is at the beck and call of her kids 24/7.

"When they were still kids, I really thought I would be a strict dad," John recalled. "Mali pala. I realized that I should give them my 100 percent trust. I must always be there for them and listen to what they have to say. In my speech I said that if there's something to be envied about me, it's that I have beautiful kids inside and out."

■ ■ ■ ■

Starting Feb. 15, Ces Drilon will be anchoring the prime time newscast of ANC (Skycable Channel 27), "Primetime News with Ces Drilon & Ricky Carandang" (weeknights at 8 p.m.). Ricky happens to be Ces' significant other. The couple that reads the news together, stays together.

■ ■ ■ ■

Tito Sotto has not yet given his wedding present to his daughter Ciara and her hubby Jojo. "I promised to give them a car," he says, "because they left theirs in Vegas."

At what point in the wedding did he cry? "When the son of Apples gave his message to the newlyweds," he recalls. "He said, 'Tito Jojo, please take care of Nene.' That's their term of endearment for Ciara."

Angelica: Hard to switch off Krissy

By MARINEL CRUZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

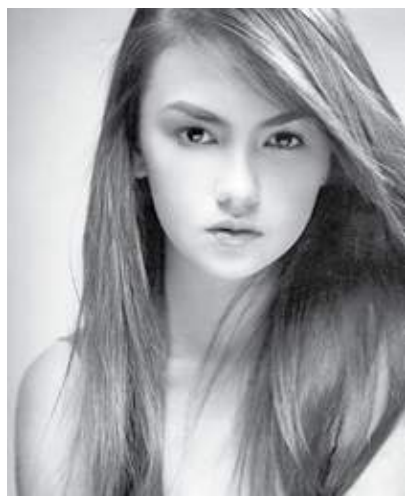
ILOILO CITY, Philippines—Angelica Panganiban is totally into Krissy, whom she popularized on the gag show, "Banana Split."

"When I'm with friends, I switch to Krissy talk. Pati pagtawa n'ya nagagaya ko. I have trouble turning her off," Angelica told Inquirer Entertainment over dinner in Jaro, Iloilo.

Krissy is Angelica's impersonation of Kris Aquino. She has copied the controversial TV host's trademark squeal, sing-song laughter and kolehiya speech. "At first, I was just mimicking Kris. As the show progressed, I began breathing life into Krissy," said Angelica.

Angelica said Krissy brought her and Aquino closer. "I'm thankful that Kris is cool with it, hindi pikon. I send her gifts once in a while to show my gratitude," she said.

The actress plays the lead role in the newest Kapamilya drama program "Rubi," premiering Feb. 15. She said Rubi is a difficult character to portray. "She's good and bad at the same time,"


Angelica Panganiban is totally into Krissy.

Angelica explained. "It's also hard to snap back to my real self right after doing Rubi. I can't be a scheming woman when the camera rolls and become me again when it stops. Luckily, the production team is very understanding. They don't take me seriously 'pag mainit ang ulo ko."

Krissy for Ilonggos

On Saturday night, Angelica once again became Krissy to entertain an Ilonggo crowd of 12,000 in a show at the Robinsons Place Ledesma Carpark here.

Kapamilya stars Jake Cuenca, Maja Salvador, Jason Abalos, Shaina Magdayao and Cacai Bautista were also in the show, which was part of the three-day Dinagyang Kapamilya Karavan.

The day before, "Tanging Yaman" star EJ Falcon was special guest in the 3rd Kapamilya Dance Showdown at the SM City Events Center in Manduriao.

The program was hosted by Josh Misajon, of the early morning magazine show "Sikat sa Iloilo," and MOR 91.1 FM radio jock Smarty Sam. DzMM radio host Winnie Cordero joined an afternoon of games with Ilonggos, also on Saturday.

Held Sunday at the Freedom Grandstand on J. M. Basa Street was the Dinagyang Hati-Hati Tribe Competition, aired live on www.abs-cbnnow.com from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. Local talents wore shirts that say "Bilib sa galing ng Pinoy," one of many designs launched recently by ABS-CBN Regional Network Group (RNG) and Fiesta Shirts.

Maryo delos Reyes relaunches all-male group, with new members

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—There is something oddly charming about a bunch of hunky guys singing and dancing to the Korean pop hit "Nobody, Nobody But You," originally popularized by Wonder Girls.

Before anyone could mutter "testosterone overload," chances are the boys of Masculados Dos have won him/her over with their cheeky bubblegum-meets-beefcake shtick.

Think Pussycat Dolls with pecs and abs.

After all, this is the same group that churned out such novelty hits as "Jumbo Hotdog" and "Macho na si Santa" under Universal Records.

Pussycat Dolls with muscles: (front row) Enrico Mofar, Robin Robel and Orlando Sol; (back row) Ozu Ong, Nico Cordova, Lexter Lazaro and Dart Kamboozia.

Masculados is the brainchild of award-winning filmmaker Maryo J. de los Reyes.

Soft spot

Direk Maryo J recently relaunched the group, combining three veterans (Enrico Mofar, Lexter Lazaro and Robin Robel) with four new members (Dart Kamboozia, Ozu Ong, Nico Cordova and Orlando Sol).

"Some of the original guys got married. Some migrated. But I've always had a soft spot for Masculados," Direk Maryo J. explained.

A soft spot for hard muscles?

"Hard-core men," the filmmaker enthused. "When I held auditions, I immediately separated the real men from those whose genders are, you might say, suspect."

Direk recruited choreographer Geleen Eugenio, vocal coach Arnold Calpe and producer/composer Ito Rapadas to train the guys and help them record their new five-track CD "Ganda, Ganda! Sexy, Sexy!"—also under Universal Records.

The "origs" Enrico, Lexter and Robin helped train the newcomers, needless to say.

Eager to learn

Said Robin: "It's a little hard because they're still adjusting. But I'm happy because I can see that they are willing to learn and are really determined."

Enrico, a ballroom dancing instructor by profession, agreed. "I'll share with them all that I know, 100 percent," he vowed. I'll teach them the right steps, how to bump and grind like a pro."

Lexter, the group's resident "strong-and-silent" type, pointed out: "I advise them to focus on work, to love it. Financial rewards will naturally follow if we are dedicated to our jobs."

The newcomers appreciate the on-the-job mentoring.

Said Dart, an aspiring actor-model before joining the group: "I'm thankful because they're patient with us. They also tell us to avoid the things that led to the original group's breakup."

Robin explained, "We remind them not to be stubborn. Not to be the black sheep of our little family."

College grad

Nico, a Political Science graduate from the University of Caloocan, said, "I absorb everything they teach me, including being focused and observant."

A gym instructor in Antipolo, Ozu was led to the group by his uncle Kim Tumibay, a movie stunt man.

"Away from work, we're friends. We support each other. We hang out," Ozu said.

Orlando, who was a member of the boy band M-Gage, is okay with being a Masculado now. Although he's being primed as the lead star of Direk Maryo J.'s upcoming "Macho Dancer 3: The Andy Chavez Story," he enjoys harmonizing with the guys.

He often does second voice in their song numbers because he had vocal training under Arnold when he was with M-Gage.

"I get to apply what I learned in M-Gage to Masculados Dos," Orlando said, more than just a little proudly.

Maharlika – Opinyon

The banality of corruption

For the 2010 elections, corruption should be the controlling issue. In the past, we could have pooh-poohed such accusations as standard campaign fodder, the smokescreen of candidates bereft of new ideas, and who use the term "fiscalizing," unique to Pinoy English, to make up for the absence of a platform. Corruption, as an issue, then becomes a fight not between good and evil, but between the "ins" and the "outs," between elite groups fighting for the spoils and who merely take their turn at the till, and who alternate in the role of plunderer and accuser.

However, under President Macapagal-Arroyo's watch, corruption has risen to unprecedented heights (or lows, ethically speaking) in the scale of the amounts stolen, brazenness of the thievery and the shamelessness of the subsequent alibis, the sheer number of the people expecting bribes at every level, and in unearned swagger by which the loot is flaunted. At this stage, it is wrong to focus only on the economic costs of corruption, or to see it mainly as a moral issue. Corruption goes into the heart of why our democracy doesn't work. Corruption's hidden costs are just as deadly as its seen costs.

We can count or at least estimate the billions of taxpayers' money that is diverted to private pockets. Just look at our congressmen's and senators' pork barrel, and you can roughly compute how many school buildings, how many feeding programs, how many hospitals, or how many scholarships all that money could have supported. Surely that is a loss. But we cannot count all the bribes entailed for each building permit, each condominium construction, each business permit, or each franchise—and then multiply that bribe by how many votes were needed at the Sanggunian or in Congress, not to mention the grease money needed to keep the petty bureaucrats happy in the regulatory agencies.

Because corruption has made public office so lucrative, it has upped the ante in our elections. The stakes are higher and purely pecuniary. It is impossible to aim for what Confucian societies call "rule by virtue," for a kind of public service that beckons forth men and women of character. Rather our corrupted democracy attracts the mercenary who see public office as merely a rent-seeking post. Worse, by raising the stakes, it has made campaigns more costly and thus excludes ordinary citizens from the contest or forces them into the waiting arms of political patrons and warlords. Worst of all, it has made elections deadly, in that the stakes being so high, it has become—for the mercenary—worth killing and maiming the innocent.

Passion For Reason
By RAUL PANGALAGAN
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Corruption has also made systematic policy-making impossible, because it is so handily hijacked to suit the partisan agenda of cronies and patrons. When I come across those grand Ten-Year Development plans, instantly my eyes glaze over and I ask myself: Oh really now? Can we truly make plans writ large without finding out in the fine print who's making a cut?

But corruption distorts policy in yet another way. Policy decisions, however sound and wise, are easily thwarted and diverted to protect the vested interests of big industrial or commercial giants, or to punish those giants who have fallen out of grace with Malacañang.

Finally, it erodes the credibility of otherwise legitimate government decisions. Ms Arroyo's decision to embargo the newly built Terminal 3 airport, for instance, purports to vindicate the public interest against bribe-giving foreign contractors, but in the end, it merely covers up the loot already pocketed by bribe-taking local influence-peddlers and shows the vindictiveness of the bribe-hungry in the Arroyo camp who were deprived of their share of the booty.

Corruption's most long-term damage however is to the youth. What lessons do we teach the next generation of Filipinos? That it's okay to look the other way? That it is just that a star witness like Rodolfo "Jun" Lozada Jr. and his family seek refuge inside the La Salle compound, while the culprits he exposed remain scot-free, and indeed if news reports are true, feel free to arrive at a modus vivendi among themselves—and keep their ill-gotten wealth intact and safe?

I believe that every child learns from kindergarten that it is good to be fair and that it isn't right to steal. At what stage does a child begin to think otherwise? In sixth grade when the teacher plays favorites and takes it easy on the child of a famous parent? In high school when he realizes that he can skim off a portion of the class funds by over-pricing a school project? Or in college when, like what actually happened in a University Belt school, an ROTC cadet was murdered in school because he exposed the racket of officers who "sold" ROTC attendance records?

And can we blame the kids if they see the rewards of the life made easy by selling out? When they see those who sold their souls enjoy their lives more, ride better cars, live in nicer homes, or even more basic, text on fancier cell phones? All moral choices call for sacrifice, but corruption ups the pressure by making compromise so normal and its rewards so easy to savor so publicly and with gusto.

Corruption has corroded our spiritual life to the core. What Hannah Arendt said of the "Banality of Evil" in regard to the Nazi officer Adolf Eichmann, we can likewise say of corruption today. We have "normalized" corruption and accepted it as part of our daily lives. It is no longer the aberration but the routine. Ms Arroyo's legacy is to have made corruption a way of life, and us, its willing accomplices.

EDITORIAL

The critical period

The Commission on Elections and its supplier Smartmatic ran "field tests" in several sites across the country on Wednesday, and Comelec Chair Jose Melo pronounced the experiment a success. But three and a half months before the May 10 polls, public anxiety over the country's first nationwide and fully automated elections continues to persist.

Public sentiment is solidly behind the automation initiative, which promises to eliminate many opportunities for election fraud and to determine the winning presidential candidate in a matter of days. But several delays in the Comelec's original schedule have stoked public anxiety, and fueled calls for a timely return to manual elections.

A question raised more than once during Wednesday's joint congressional oversight committee hearing deserves to be asked again: When is the Comelec's critical period? That is to say, where is the point of no return? What is the election agency's real deadline for deciding whether to hold full or partial manual elections?

Indeed, the Comelec is readying a contingency plan that assumes that as much as 30 percent of the country's voting precincts will resort to manual elections. The question, then, is: Which precincts are last on the delivery schedule (and therefore have the first opportunity to return to manual elections)? The Comelec must schedule the deliveries prudently, even defensively, because if notoriously fraud-prone areas (such as those towns and provinces identified in the "Hello, Garci" wiretaps) are at the end of the list, then the public is right to anticipate skullduggery-in-the-making.

The reassurance Comelec's chief lawyer, Ferdinand Rafanan, offered the committee is well-taken. Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez had aired his concern (one shared by many, we are sure) that the 30-percent threshold seemed too high, and vulnerable to manipulation by political operators. "It's not really because we foresee that there will be manual counting in 30 percent [of the clustered precincts]," Rafanan said. "That is not acceptance on our part, that's preparation."

Granted. But this takes us back to the question of "critical period." What is the decision point for converting preparation into acceptance? In other words, when will the Comelec decide that a particular cluster of precincts, or a particular locality, must resort to the manual vote?

Most important: The field tests the Comelec and Smartmatic conducted on Wednesday were largely successful—and yet the various test sites reported widely varying transmission times, and even technicians reported some minor glitches. Most worrying, the Comelec had not received the results from the two test precincts in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato by 3 p.m., or a few hours after the test started.

The inevitable, time-related, question: What is the acceptable window for transmission of results? This is not a simple question but a serious one, precisely because of our sordid history of election fraud. An hour's delay can prove to be critical indeed.

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Historical markers

For the past eight years, as chairman of the National Historical Institute, I have unveiled cast-bronze markers installed on various sites and structures throughout the archipelago. A marker concealed under heavy red velvet is revealed as we pull on a string. The mechanism for this "curtain raising" or rather "curtain sliding" is not full-proof; at times I had to dispense with the string and tug on the curtains. Once, when former President Fidel Ramos unveiled a marker for the Federation of Women's Clubs in the Philippines, he quipped, "Nakakapanood ako nito noong araw ah, pagbukas ng telon, burles (I used to watch these before, when the curtains open you have a striptease)." Everyone laughed. That was the last time we had curtain raising.

From then on we had the cloth attached to the top of the historical marker with double-sided tape, and unveiled by pulling the cloth away with a string. I would often throw the cloth away before the cameras clicked and suggest that we bundle the cloth and toss it at the crowd, like a bride throwing her bouquet toward reluctant singles who don't want to catch the bouquet and get married next.

Looking Back
By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Feng shui rules stated that pulling the cloth covering a marker down was not auspicious, so we should pull upwards. We had balloons attached to the cloth and once they were released, the curtain flew away.

There is an art to marker unveiling and ribbon cutting that I have learned from eight years' experience. Two people in front of a ceremonial ribbon should always place themselves with their back to the entrance of the room or exhibition being inaugurated, as this looks good for the cameras. People cut on each side of the bouquet which is then presented to the woman or more senior of the VIP guests. I always insist that brand-new scissors be used as a form of respect and, if possible, that these be of the best kind because they are taken home by the guests of honor.

In Japan one has to wear immaculate white cloth gloves offered on a silver tray before cutting the ceremonial ribbon. That should be the norm here, but I guess nobody knows where to buy those disposable gloves.

Eight years of ribbon cutting and marker unveiling is a long time. I thought I had seen them all, but last Wednesday we made history by installing yet another cast-bronze marker on the base of the flagpole in Rizal Park. There are now five different markers on that flagpole base, and we pray this is the last.

The marker unveiled last Wednesday is truly historical because, at 52 x 72 inches, it is the biggest ever fabricated for the National Historical Institute. This immortalizes in bronze all the names of the so-called "First Congress of the Republic of the Philippines 1946-1949." It lists all members of the Senate and the House of Representatives. That is a lot of text indeed, since all the names have to be preceded by the honorific "Hon." and all congressional districts had to be listed with the names! One wonders if anyone who is not preparing for a TV game show will take the trouble to read every name inscribed on it.

From my experience, people see the markers but rarely stop to look closely and read them. A historical marker is installed to remind people in the present about events and personages in the past. It is always best to have it, for those who want or need it.

Everything began with a request from Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla who had gone through the old marker that was installed on the flagpole base and asked why his father, the Hon. Constancio Padilla of Nueva Ecija, was missing from the marker, and thus missing from history. I thought it was a simple omission and ordered it rectified.

The fun began when the National Historical Institute contacted the Senate and House of Representatives. The bronze marker installed in 1946 did not jibe with that in the present Congressional Record. The fact that 14 names in the Record, including Luis Taruc and Amado Yuson, were missing from the marker was not a problem. That three names—Luis Clarin, Carlos Fortich and Narciso Ramos—were in the marker but not in the Record was a problem.

Reconciling the marker and the Record revealed that in 1946 some officially proclaimed representatives were not allowed to take their seats based on alleged "fraud and terrorism" committed during the elections. Eleven elected representatives not allied with the ruling Liberal Party were barred by their colleagues, because they were openly opposed to the Parity Rights Amendment to the Bell Trade Act.

Luis Taruc and Jesus Lava of the Democratic Alliance were dismissed from Congress. Narciso Ramos who was elected representative of the 5th district of Pangasinan was appointed to the United Nations and was replaced by Cipriano Allas. Carlos A.H. Fortich of Bukidnon died before completing his term and was replaced by his widow, Remedios Ozamis Fortich, who is missing from the marker but found in the Congressional Record. Amado Yuzon of the Democratic Alliance, unseated in May 1946, moved to the Nacionalista Party and was restored, yet his name was not on the marker.

Everything seemed so simple in the beginning, but in the process of reconciling the marker and the record a lot of history came out of the woodwork, proving that politics also affects the way we remember our past.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Samu't Sari

SILENT PROTEST

Above, former garment workers, their families and supporters stage a silent protest in front of the Horiguchi Building which houses the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Wednesday morning to stop the Garment Workers Trust Fund from donating $625,000 in leftover funds from the settlement of a $20-million Saipan garment class action suit.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Right, a day after a silent protest in front of the U.S. District Court for the NMI, former garment workers and their supporters hold a silent protest in front of the law office of Atty. Timothy Bellas, to stop the Garment Workers Trust Fund chairman from donating leftover class action suit settlement funds to 14 charitable institutions. The workers said the leftover money should be distributed to them instead.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Rabby Syed, president of the United Workers Movement-NMI, gestures as he talks to former garment workers and their supporters in front of the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Wednesday morning.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

DESPEDIDA DINNER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

MIFICPA hosted a despedida dinner for POLO's Labor Attache' Joan Lourdes D. Lavilla Thursday night at the Shirley's Coffee Shop Susupe. MIFICPA officers and members were also joined by Philippines Consul General Medardo Macaraig, Consul Belinda Ante, OWWA WelOff R. Tayag, and Lavilla's successor, new Labor Attache' Carmelina Velasquez.

CAPITOL GUEST

Left, at the U.S. Capitol U.S. Rep. Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan (D-MP), right, introduced Staff Sgt. Brandon Camacho, center, to Armed Services Committee chair Ike Skelton. Sergeant Camacho spent a day in Washington as the guest of Sablan, culminating with attending the President's State of the Union address at the U.S. House of Representatives.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BOY SCOUTING WEEK

Boy scouts and educators listen cram the governor's conference room on Thursday afternoon for the signing of the CNMI Boy Scouting Week proclamation in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

BAPTISM

Above, Jiro Anthony Kenishi was baptized last Saturday at the Santa Soledad Church in Kagman. Baby Jiro is seen here with Martilina and Jerry Kenishi along with godparents and friends.'

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy birthday Fely Robles. May you have many more birthdays to come. We pray that you will soon find not the "best man" but the "groom." Stay happy! We love you, from your mother Lalaine, Donna, and Charlie.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

YoungStyle

By MARGARET WEBB PRESSLER
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Tracking the arctic wolf in its habitat

WASHINGTON—Learning about the behavior of wild animals often requires hours and hours of personal observation. But what if the animal can't be followed?

That's the problem David Mech (pronounced "Meech") has had for much of his 50-year career studying wolves in the United States. "You can't just go out and see a wolf," he said, because they are endangered and afraid of humans. So Mech spent years capturing wolves, putting radio collars on them, then tracking their movements by airplane.

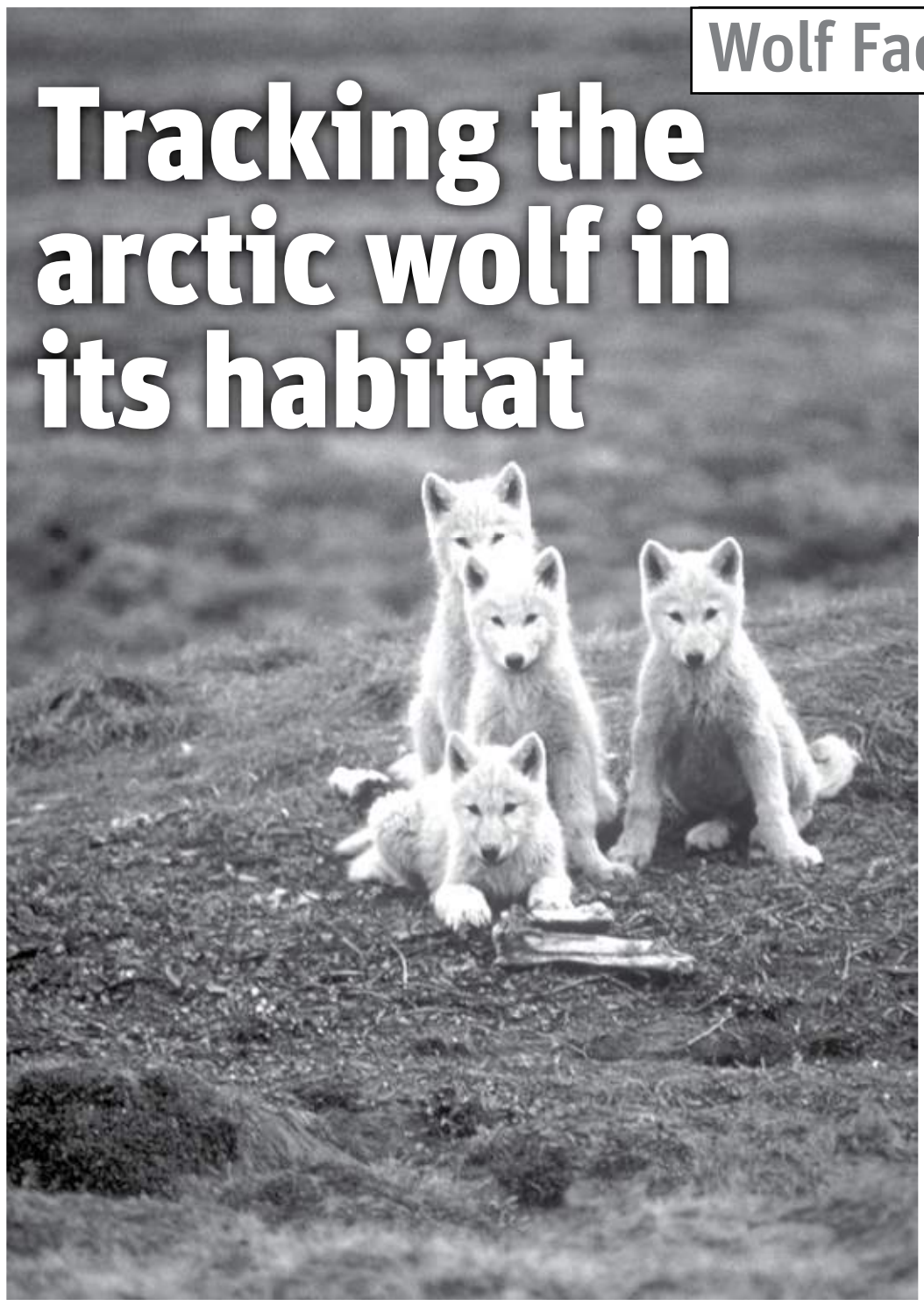
But when Mech, a senior research scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey, began studying arctic wolves 24 years ago, it was a different story. These animals, a subspecies of the gray wolf and not endangered, had never been hunted or trapped by humans because they live so far north. Arctic wolves are so unafraid of people they have even untied Mech's shoelace and pulled off his glove.

Now, Mech goes to Ellesmere Island in remote northern Canada, 600 miles from the North Pole, every July. At that time of year, the sun never sets, so there is 24 hours of daylight and the temperature is usually in the 40s. It may even get into the 60s for a day or two. When he started going in 1986, "I would just sit there and watch these wolves around the den," Mech said. Over the years, he saw the pack range in size from a dozen members to as many as 20. He could even follow them hunting, using a small all-terrain vehicle. Mech's observations provided valuable information about wolf behavior to animal scientists around the world.

But three years ago, the wolf pack moved its den to a location that Mech couldn't reach. Camped at a remote weather station, he could only wait until the wolves came to him. So last summer Mech, 73, decided to use radio collars again, and he put one on the dominant male of the pack, named Brutus, who has worn the collar ever since.

The result is the first-ever information on the habits of wolves living in the Arctic during the winter—when it is dark 24 hours a day and the temperature is routinely 20 or 30 degrees below zero. Brutus' collar sends data to a satellite every 12 hours noting his location, and every four days, Mech gets an e-mail from the satellite service showing where Brutus has been. Mech is keeping a blog explaining the pack's movements, which you can follow at www.international-wolfcenter.blogspot.com. (Also check his photos from 2006 of the beautiful, snow-white animals and their pups).

Last month, Mech was surprised to see that Brutus traveled between points as much as 80 miles apart—even crossing a huge frozen waterway to get to another island—probably for better hunting of muskoxen. Over time, Mech hopes the data will help scientists understand how these animals survive in such a harsh environment, possibly helping endangered species of wolves in the United States.



THE WASHINGTON POST

Arctic wolves, which live in remote northern Canada, are less afraid of humans than the endangered gray wolf. David Mech, a senior research scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey, uses radio collars to follow their movements.

Wolf Fact

WASHINGTON—Scientifically, wolves are members of the Canidae family (pronounced "CAN-i-day"). So are domestic dogs, foxes, coyotes and jackals. (C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

The Nets: From bad to worst?

By FRED BOWEN
Special to The Washington Post

Bowen is the author of 11 kids' sports books including "Touchdown Trouble" and "Soccer Team Upset."

This National Basketball Association season may be one for the history books, because the New Jersey Nets have a chance to be the worst NBA team ever.

The Nets, who had a record of 4 wins and 40 losses (4-40), are on pace to be even worse than the woeful 1972-73 Philadelphia 76ers, who posted a 9-73 mark.

The Nets may set the worst-ever mark because they are really bad. The Nets are the lowest-scoring team in the league, averaging about 90 points a game; that's 20 points a game less than the league's highest-scoring team, the Phoenix Suns. The Nets are also the worst-shooting team, hitting 42 percent of their shots and 28 percent of their three-point shots. Oh, yeah, they stink at rebounding and defense, too. Maybe that's why they lose by an average of 13 points a game.

The Nets have one very good, young player in 21-year-old Brook Lopez. The 7-foot center is scoring 19 points a game and grabbing on average more than nine rebounds. But besides Lopez, the Nets don't have much. They started the season by losing their first 18 games and haven't gotten much better since.

Of course, the 1972-73 Philadelphia 76ers were really bad, too. The 76ers had won the NBA championship in 1967. But all their stars from that championship season, including Hall of Fame center Wilt Chamberlain, guard Hal Greer and high-scoring forwards Chet Walker and Billy Cunningham, were long gone by 1972.

That year, the 76ers' best player was a guard named Fred Carter, who scored 20 points a game. But Carter took too many crazy shots and committed too many turnovers. Maybe that is why his nickname was "Mad Dog."

The 76ers lost their first 15 games and were only 4-39 after 43 games. But then the 76ers lost their next 19 games and their record stood at 4-58. Incredibly, the 76ers won five out of seven games during a two-week stretch in February to raise their record to 9-60. Then they fell apart and lost their final 13 games.

Maybe the Nets can grab a few more wins during the remainder of the long NBA season. They might beat teams that have slipped out of the playoff race and don't care much about winning. For example, the Nets have a chance for a rare victory Friday night when they host the slumping Washington Wizards (14-30).

If the Nets don't win at least 10 games this season, they will become part of NBA history. But in a way that they never wanted to be.

By MOIRA E. MCLAUGHLIN
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Ever wonder how it snows?

"Cumulonimbus" or "nimbostratus" may sound like names for your big brother after he steals your iPod and loads it with songs you don't like, but they are actually the names of clouds that most often bring snow.

Clouds are made of drops of water attached to foreign particles such as dust or pollen. When the temperature reaches 32 degrees or colder in a cloud, the droplets turn to small bits of ice. As the ice particles move through a cloud, they bump into other ice particles, creating snowflakes. When the snowflakes get heavy, gravity pulls them down. If it's cold enough below, they will hit the ground as snow.

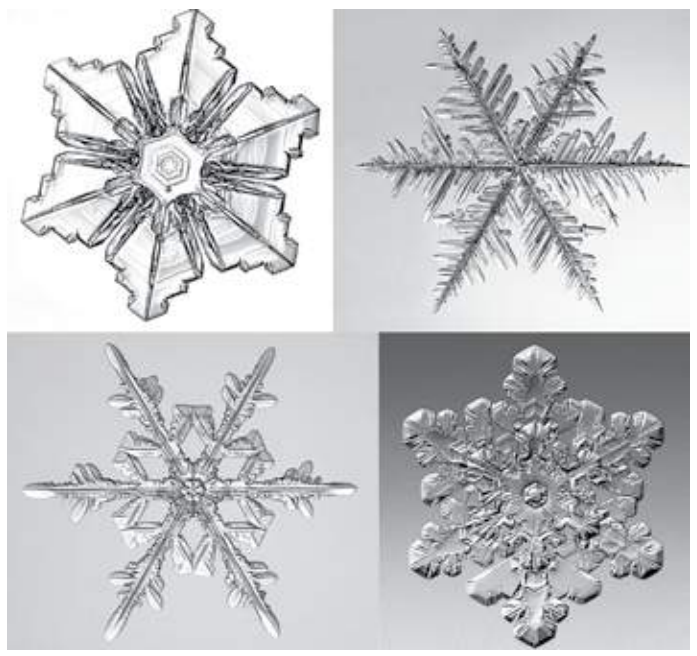
It has snowed in every state, even Hawaii! But since it has to be cold to snow, it snows mostly in northern climates and places that are at high elevation. Elevation is how far above the sea a place sits. Mount Rainier in Washington state has an elevation of more than 14,000 feet. It's the snowiest place in the United States, getting about 680 inches (about 57 feet) a year.

It is never too cold to snow, but prime snow conditions are often associated with milder temperatures. That's because very cold air is usually dry, meaning it doesn't contain much water. If there is no water in the air, then there is no potential for snow.

It's true that no two snowflakes are identical, but they are all hexagonal, meaning they have six sides. In 1951, the International Commission on Snow and Ice began classifying snowflakes into 16 categories.

Most snowflakes are less than half an inch across, but some measure almost two inches. No one knows for sure how big snowflakes can be. (Can you imagine trying to measure all the snowflakes that fall in the world? That would be a big job!) A California physicist named Ken Libbrecht does study snowflakes, however. On his Web site (www.snowcrystals.com), he encourages people to use a magnifying glass to check out flakes for themselves. He calls snowflakes "remarkably complex and beautiful structures."

For adults who don't get the day off when it snows, snow can be a pain. For you, snow can mean no school, sledding and hot chocolate. And that is truly beautiful, too!



THE WASHINGTON POST

California physicist Ken Libbrecht studies snowflakes, and on his Web site (www.snowcrystals.com), he encourages people to use a magnifying glass to check out flakes for themselves. He calls snowflakes "remarkably complex and beautiful structures."

RIDDLE CARD

1. How did the Dark Ages get their name?
2. If a tree were to break some windows, what word would they say?
3. What is the hardest thing to deal with?
4. How do you spell mousetrap in 3 letters?
5. What animal is on every legal document?

Answers: 1. It was knight time when they occurred. 2. Tremend-us. 3. An old deck of cards. 4. C-A-T. 5. A seal.

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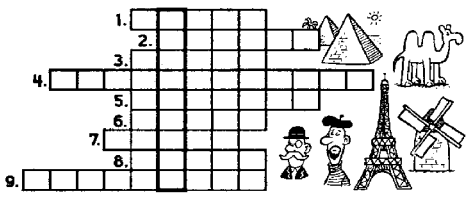
Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

WHERE IN THE WORLD



Below are the names of nine world-famous landmarks. Identify the country where each is located, then enter it in the grid to the left.

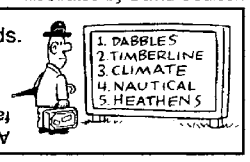
1. The Imperial Palace.
2. The Kremlin Palace.
3. The Aswan High Dam.
4. Cleopatra's Needle.
5. Big Ben.
6. Leaning Tower of Pisa.
7. The Forbidden City.
8. The Taj Mahal.
9. Great Barrier Reef.

There is a dark frame around one of the columns in our grid. If you correctly solve the puzzle, the letters in the frame, top to bottom, will spell out the name of a famous country.

Answers: 1. Japan. 2. Russia. 3. Egypt. 4. United States. 5. England. 6. Italy. 7. China. 8. India. 9. Australia. The dark framed column spells "Argentina."

Illustrated by David Coulson

ODD MAN OUT! To the right is a list of five words. Can you figure out which word doesn't belong?



Answer: Dabbles. The other words all contain the names of famous cities. (2. Berlin. 3. Lima. 4. Utica. 5. Athens.)

FIND THE SEVEN WORDS PUZZLE! In the word square to the right, we've removed six of the letters to spell out the word "SELDOM." Can you replace these letters in the squares so that you will have four three-letter words across and three four-letter words down? Time limit: is 60 seconds.

S		A	R
E	A		
L	I	T	
D			T
O			
M			

Answers: (Across) Mar, ale, its, dot. (Down) Maid, alto, rest.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was American journalist, author and humorist Don Marquis who made the following sage observation: "Procrastination is the art of keeping up with yesterday."

■ A giant carnivorous plant has recently been discovered on a remote mountaintop in the Philippines. The second largest pitcher plant on record, *nepenthes attenboroughii* secretes a nectar that lures insects, frogs and even rats into its trap, where enzymes and acids break down the animal and digest it.

■ There has been a lot of debate about whether older drivers should be required to pass driving tests in order to renew their licenses, with failing sight and diminished judgment being cited as reasons for the more stringent requirement. However, statistics tend to indicate that, as a group, teenagers are the more dangerous drivers, with their auto-accident death rate roughly triple that of the elderly.

■ If you're thinking about going back to school during this economic downturn, you might want to consider working toward a master's degree in business administration. The average salary increase enjoyed by new MBA holders is a whopping 64 percent.

■ The men's formal attire known as the tuxedo takes its name from the Tuxedo Park Club in New York, where the clothing first became popular. The word itself is derived from the Algonquian word for wolf.

■ The man who holds the world record for running 100 meters and 200 meters, and who has won three Olympic gold medals, is a Jamaican by the name of Usain Bolt. Yes, Bolt.

■ The Zagat restaurant rating system recently conducted a survey of Americans' tipping habits. The results? It seems that residents of Philadelphia are the most generous tippers in the nation, leaving an average of 19.6 percent. The average across the country is 19 percent.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "People who have no weaknesses are terrible; there is no way of taking advantage of them."—Anatole France

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MAGIC MAZE ● CHINESE —

C	E	E	R	U	T	L	U	C	C	A	X	V	T	R
P	N	S	E	L	Z	Z	U	P	A	E	L	T	J	H
F	D	B	V	Y	X	V	T	R	M	G	N	N	P	O
M	K	I	O	G	N	E	W	Y	E	A	R	A	E	E
D	Y	E	L	S	R	A	P	B	R	B	Z	L	X	R
W	U	T	U	U	R	Q	O	U	I	B	N	P	L	T
S	R	E	T	C	A	R	A	H	C	A	J	K	I	A
G	F	R	I	D	C	T	A	Y	A	C	X	L	W	E
V	O	T	O	S	S	R	P	O	N	N	K	I	L	H
T	K	J	N	E	D	R	A	G	S	I	N	S	G	T
F	E	S	R	E	K	C	E	H	C	A	I	D	O	Z

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Americans	Culture	Parsley	Silk plant
Cabbage	Garden	Puzzles	Torture
Characters	Ink	Restaurant	Zodiac
Checkers	New Year	Revolution	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		÷		3
÷		÷		x	
	+		+		10
+		+		−	
	−		x		16
10		5		22	

1 2 3 4 5 6 6 8 9

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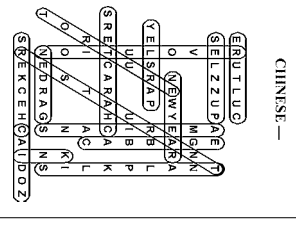
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



CHINESE —

GO FIGURE ANSWER

3	5	÷	9	+	6
	x		÷		÷
10	6	+	3	+	1
	−		+		+
16	8	x	2	−	4
	22		5		10

Cat fight won't end

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I have two indoor cats, a male and female, both fixed. A few months ago a fight broke out between them and a neighbor cat that approached them on the screened porch. Even though the fight was with the neighbor cat, my cats "Bull" and "Sally" have been getting into vicious fights with each other ever since, with Sally instigating them. I thought they were getting better recently, but the fighting has broken out again, and now I'm noticing urine marking in the front room as well. How can I keep the peace here?—Melanie, via e-mail

DEAR MELANIE: It will be very difficult to rekindle your cats' friendship, but you can forge a peace treaty between the two. Temple Grandin, in her excellent book "Animals Make Us Human" (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), discusses cat fights and offers some ideas for resolving them.

The incident that triggered your cats' problem is called "redirected aggression," Grandin explains. One cat, probably Sally, could not get to the neighbor cat, so she turned that aggression on her companion.

Immediately after a fight, the cats must be separated—put in different areas of the house. For some cats, a temporary separation is enough to reduce the aggressiveness and restore calm. But for your cats, a gradual reintroduction will be necessary as it's clear the aggression is still there.

Put the aggressive cat (Sally) into a carrier and then let Bull come into the same room. If Sally starts hissing and spitting, put a blanket over the carrier. Remove the blanket when Sally calms down. Gradually increase the amount of time the carrier with Sally inside is in the same room as Bull.

At the same time, consider giving both cats anti-anxiety medication prescribed by their veterinarian. Hopefully, they will stop fighting with a gradual reintroduction to each other, but if they don't, you will need to keep them separated.

■ ■ ■

Send your pet questions to Sam Mazzotta at ask@pawscorner.com, or write to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. And find more pet resources at PawsCorner.com.

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Pass the cookies on Super Bowl Sunday

Whether your team has made it to Super Bowl XLIV or not, it's still a great excuse to get together with family and friends on Feb. 7. Get your kids involved in preparing a super snack that the crowd will love. The ingredients for these chocolate football-shaped cookies come right off the shelf and out of the refrigerator in a matter of minutes, and their whimsical football shape is created with homemade "tin can" cookie cutters.

If you are hosting the party and the youngest kids get antsy during the first half, enlist them in the preparations and let them serve the tasty, whimsical treats at halftime.

Here's what you'll need;

■ 1 large empty stewed-tomato tin can (28 ounces) for a big cookie cutter, or a small, empty tomato-sauce can for a medium-size cookie cutter

■ 1 package of your favorite chocolate refrigerator cookie dough, or mix a batch of your favorite homemade dough

■ Rolling pin

■ Cookie sheets

■ Canned white butter frosting, or mix your own batch

■ 1 zipper-style plastic bag

1. Start the fun by making your own cookie cutter that kids can easily handle. Wash and dry the can, remove the label and cut off the bottom and any sharp edges. Gently bend the rim until it is in the shape of a football.

2. Roll out the cookie dough and cut cookie shapes with the football-shaped cookie "can" cutter. Place cookies on cookie sheets and bake according to the package or recipe instructions. Cool.

3. Spoon frosting into the plastic bag. Cut a small hole in one bottom corner and squeeze the frosting through the hole, making stitching marks and laces on the cookies. Write the name of the team you are rooting for on larger cookies. Arrange on a platter.

Alternative idea: Bake a batch of brownies on a rimmed cooked sheet and cut out football shapes with the football cookie "can" cutter when slightly cooled.

Or, prepare a package of chocolate cookie mix, such as Betty Crocker Double Chocolate Chunk cookies. Spread the batter on a cookie sheet and bake longer than package directions for standard cookies. When slightly cooled, cut out football shapes with cookie can cutters. Decorate.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Beyonce? Taylor? Lady Gaga? The AP's Grammy Picks

By NEKESA MUMBI MOODY and MESFIN FEKADU
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITERS

This year's Grammy Awards seem to be shaping up as the battle of the blond divas.

In one corner—Beyonce, the fierce veteran who's already won a dozen Grammys but has yet to grasp the most prestigious Grammy honors—album and record of the year. She's up for those trophies and more, with a leading 10 nominations.

In the other corner—Taylor Swift, the relative newbie whose outstanding sales have made her the reigning queen of pop, despite her proud country tilt. Though she was nominated for best new artist, she also has the chance to become the Grammys' top artist this year, with eight nominations for her best-selling CD, "Fearless."

Yet something tells us these two power-hitters may end up knocking each other out, allowing some winners few anticipated. We'll see how it all goes on Sunday night, when CBS airs the Grammys live from Los Angeles in a show that will feature performances by Swift, Beyonce, Lady Gaga and more, plus a 3-D tribute to Michael Jackson. But here's how we've scripted the night:

RECORD OF THE YEAR

NOMINEES: "Halo," Beyonce; "I Gotta Feeling," The Black Eyed Peas; "Use Somebody," Kings Of Leon; "Poker Face," Lady Gaga; "You Belong With Me," Taylor Swift.

MOODY: "Halo" was a great anthem, but when you think of Beyonce songs that defined 2009, you think "Single Ladies"—and this ain't it. "I Gotta Feeling" is a better bet, but it's also probably one of the weakest Peas songs. Swift's "You Belong With Me" has more momentum, but it's likely she'll split the blonde Grammy vote with Lady Gaga and Beyonce, so the Kings of Leon benefit.

FEKADU: If Beyonce's "Single Ladies" had been nominated here, it would win. But it's nominated in the song of the year category—a songwriter's award, when it really deserves recognition for its production. That's the only song I could see competing with "Use Somebody," which will win here.

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

NOMINEES: "I Am ... Sasha Fierce," Beyonce; "The E.N.D.," The Black Eyed Peas; "The Fame," Lady Gaga; "Big Whiskey And The Groogrux King," Dave Matthews Band; "Fearless," Taylor Swift.

FEKADU: I'm 23, I speak for the younger generation—and the only album in this category that's not on my iPod is the Dave Matthews Band. So I'm gonna guess the Grammy oldheads will go with them. Plus, it's also a sentimental one since the disc comes after the death of band member LeRoi Moore.

MOODY: So disrespectful, young man! And what's an iPod anyway? Beyonce, Lady Gaga and Swift had the year's most successful records and they truly provided the soundtrack to 2009. One of them would be the obvious choice—but the Grammys don't do obvious. Instead, Grammy voters tend to go for the veterans and the sentimental favorite—and that is the DMB.

SONG OF THE YEAR

NOMINEES (songwriters): "Poker Face," Lady Gaga and RedOne; "Pretty Wings," Hod David and Musze; "Single Ladies (Put a Ring On It)," Thaddis Harrell, Beyonce Knowles, Terius Nash & Christopher Stewart; "Use Somebody," Caleb Followill, Jared Followill, Matthew Followill and Nathan Followill; "You Belong With Me," Liz Rose and Taylor Swift.

MOODY: Until Beyonce stops writing with a team, she's not likely to win a song of the year nod, no matter how great the tune. "Poker Face" is too edgy for voters, and "Pretty Wings" too urban. While Swift has proven her songwriting mettle, the song is likely to be seen as too lighthearted. "Use Somebody" is both gritty and romantic, which will put it over the top.

AP

In this June 21, 2009 file photo, Beyonce Knowles performs at Madison Square Garden in New York.

FEKADU: It would be lovely to see Maxwell win his first (and overdue) Grammy in this category—but he won't, since he didn't write the song! Though "Pretty Wings" deserves this award, at the same time, how could the Recording Academy deny three kings (and their cousin)? "Use Somebody" will be crowned song of the year.

NEW ARTIST

NOMINEES: Zac Brown Band, Keri Hilson, MGMT, Silversun Pickups, The Ting Tings.

FEKADU: Though she's talented, Keri Hilson didn't really show the world she was the brightest newcomer on her own. The likeness of the Silversun Pickups, the Ting Tings and MGMT would make you believe that none of the rockers will win. But though they are similar, MGMT has the most buzz. That leaves the trendy rockers versus the country mob. MGMT will prevail.

MOODY: Agreed that Keri Hilson won't win, but not because of her collaborations. Not sure I agree with the idea that MGMT has the most momentum. The Zac Brown Band has been getting lots of attention lately, and MGMT's buzz peaked sometime last year. Plus, MGMT, the Ting Tings and Silversun Pickups will split the hipster vote. So the Zac Brown Band is likely to win out.

POP VOCAL ALBUM

NOMINEES: "The E.N.D.," The Black Eyed Peas; "Breakthrough," Colbie Caillat; "All I Ever Wanted," Kelly Clarkson; "The Fray," The Fray; "Funhouse," P!nk.

MOODY: If the Grammys gave the Black Eyed Peas a Grammy for "My Humps"—and they did—they're guaranteed to win in a year where they had two of the year's biggest hits. That's too bad for P!nk, whose artistry is often overlooked yet deserves to be richly rewarded.

FEKADU: And they also gave P!nk a Grammy for the lackluster "Trouble" in 2003, which means they'll reward the singer for her impeccable work on "Funhouse."

CONTEMPORARY R&B ALBUM

NOMINEES: "I Am ... Sasha Fierce," Beyonce; "Intuition," Jamie Foxx; "The Introduction of Marcus Cooper," Pleasure P; "Ready," Trey Songz; "Thr33 Ringz," T-Pain.

MOODY: It's inexplicable to have only one great album going against a bunch of sub-par CDs, yet have fantastic works like Anthony Hamilton's "The Point of It All" in a separate R&B album category. Why can't the likes of Hamilton or India.Arie compete with the Beyonces of the R&B world? Of course, since they're not in this category, look for the standard Sasha Fierce win.

FEKADU: Ditto.

RAP ALBUM

NOMINEES: "Universal Mind Control," Common; "Relapse," Eminem; "R.O.O.T.S.," Flo Rida; "The Ecstatic," Mos Def; "The Renaissance," Q-Tip.

FEKADU: While Q-Tip's album is the best from the list, and Mos Def follows, the others show that the Recording Academy is so far gone from where hip-hop really is. With that said, this award will probably go to Eminem since this was his "comeback" album. Plus, all of his CDs, excluding "Encore," won this award too—though those records were actually good.

MOODY: Hello, where have you been? Nas buried hip-hop like two years ago! Actually, it still has some life in it, but it's not represented here, especially with "Relapse," Eminem's worst album. But look for it to get a Grammy anyway; he owns this category.

COUNTRY ALBUM

NOMINEES: "The Foundation," Zac Brown Band; "Twang," George Strait; "Fearless," Taylor Swift; "Defying Gravity," Keith Urban; "Call Me Crazy," Lee Ann Womack.

MOODY: The Zac Brown Band, Womack, Strait and Urban have about as much chance as Kanye to win against Swift's "Fearless." Swift wins for her amazing year—and amazing album.

FEKADU: I don't think the Grammy voters want to break Swift's award-winning streak with her CD "Fearless." If they do, she might write a song about them too!

In NH town, Salinger's privacy is important to all

CORNISH, N.H. (AP)—In the small New Hampshire town where recluse J.D. Salinger hid from the world, he lived in bucolic isolation in a hilltop home with commanding southerly views across the Connecticut River, Vermont's ski resorts visible in the distance.

For years, the man some called "Jerry" rattled around town in an old Toyota, wearing a felt fedora and making weekly trips to the Plainfield General Store to pick up copies of the New York Times they saved for him. He was sometimes spotted in the library at nearby Dartmouth College, where sightings would send students into frantic "JD alerts," texting one another that the famous author was in the "stacks."

But woe to the "Catcher in the Rye" fan who came looking for his chalet-style house, up a winding 1 1/2-lane road in a rural town, population 1,758. Locals were as fierce in protecting his privacy as he was.

"Everyone in the town felt that way. The interesting part was that we all knew where he lived," said Mike Ackerman, 42, who grew up here and now operates the Cornish General Store.

"The fun part was that if the people looking for him were a little more arrogant in their ways, we'd send them on a little more of a wild goose chase. But we never told anyone where he actually lived," said Ackerman, who met Salinger several times when he worked as a driver for UPS, delivering packages to him.

Elizabeth Church, 53, of Plainfield, who lives about three-quarters of a mile from Salinger, said that for a few years, she saw him regularly —rolling down the bumpy country road passing her house, his Toyota in high gear, both hands on the wheel, staring straight ahead, the engine whining.

"You could not only see him, but you could hear him coming and going, every Sunday morning. This went on for several years," she said.

Michelle Baker, 48, of Cornish, whose husband's family was friendly with Salinger, said she knew him in passing and spoke to him by telephone on a number of occasions.

"He didn't want anybody to know what was going on in his life. We just didn't pry or ask him anything unless he divulged it."

The privacy protection continued even after Salinger died Wednesday.

His longtime auto mechanic at Plainfield Sales and Service said he always assured Salinger and his wife that he'd be discreet and not talk about them. "Until someone from the family tells me otherwise, that's the way it is," he said. He didn't want to give his name.

Salinger would occasionally take in a basketball game at Dartmouth, in Hanover.

Martha Beattie, 55, of Boston, who coached his son, Matt Salinger, on the crew team at Phillips Academy-Andover in Andover, Mass., and met him once in the 1970s, saw him at games in Hanover twice in the past month —once at a women's game, once at a men's game.

Both times he was alone, sitting in the same spot, wearing big round tortoise-shell eyeglasses and a scarf, reading the program, she said. Each time, she said hello.

"He looked like a writer," she said. "He was a little hunched over, but he didn't look like 91," she said.

Beattie's daughter, Nell, a Dartmouth senior, told Beattie the library sightings were a delight for the collegians. They called them "JD alerts," the older Beattie said Thursday.

Matt Salinger answered the doorbell at the home Thursday by rolling open a kitchen window and speaking through it.

"My father was a great father," was all he said.

Brown says he can beat the president—at hoops

BURBANK, Calif. (AP)—Barely a week after his knockout win in the Massachusetts Senate race, Scott Brown boasted Thursday that he can beat President Barack Obama.

At basketball.

In an appearance on "The Jay Leno Show" Thursday, the Republican said he challenged the Democratic president to a two-on-two showdown when they talked after his upset victory on election night.

Brown

Brown says he'd team up with his daughter, who plays guard at Boston College.

Brown, whose basketball skills helped him win college admission, predicted a tough match but added, "I think we'd have the upper hand."

The once little-known state legislator jolted the national political landscape by capturing the Senate seat long held by the late Democratic Sen. Edward Kennedy. He appeared briefly on Leno's show via satellite hookup from Newton, Mass.

Prodded by Leno, he revealed he stole records from a store when he was 12 years old, but after being scolded by a judge saw the error of his ways.

"I haven't done anything like that since," Brown said.

Leno says he 'felt really bad' for O'Brien

CHICAGO (AP)—Jay Leno says he "felt really bad" for Conan O'Brien.

Leno told Oprah Winfrey on Thursday's episode of her talk show that he thinks what happened to O'Brien is "unfair." NBC has unseated O'Brien from "The Tonight Show" and moved Leno back to the program he had hosted for 17 years. Leno is scheduled to return to "Tonight" on March 1.

Leno also says he has "regrets" that the situation wasn't handled better - but he isn't sure what he could have done differently. He told Winfrey that NBC executives asked him to leave "Tonight" in 2004 because they wanted to give the program to O'Brien.

Harpo Productions has asked O'Brien to appear on "The Oprah Winfrey Show," but an appearance hasn't been confirmed.

AP

Actress Anne Hathaway reacts as she is kissed by Clifford Murray, left, president of the Hasty Pudding Theatricals and Derek Mueller, right, vice president, as they celebrate her as Harvard University's Hasty Pudding Theatricals Woman of the Year in Cambridge, Mass. Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010.

Anne Hathaway gets her pudding pot at Harvard

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP)—Oscar-nominated actress Anne Hathaway has received a good-natured ribbing from Harvard's Hasty Pudding Theatricals student drama troupe.

The group's Woman of the Year was honored Thursday with a parade down Massachusetts Avenue near the university followed by a roast where she received her pudding pot from Harvard men in drag.

She joins a distinguished list of past recipients that includes Katharine Hepburn, Lauren Bacall and Meryl Streep.

Hathaway was nominated for an Academy Award for best actress in 2009 for her role in "Rachel Getting Married."

After the parade, Hathaway was roasted on stage in typical Hasty Pudding Theatricals fashion where then she slew a "dragon."

Hasty Pudding Man of the Year Justin Timberlake is to be honored Feb. 5.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Travolta says faith helped him through son's death

NEW YORK (AP)—John Travolta says Scientology has helped him deal with the tragic death of his son, Jett. The actor walked the red carpet with wife Kelly Preston on Thursday night in New York to promote his new film, "From Paris With Love." He spoke about how the family's church has worked with them on healing, though he did not mention Scientology by name. He says the church has helped stabilize the family and that has allowed Travolta to begin pursuing his acting career again. Jett Travolta died Jan. 2, 2009, of a seizure at the family's vacation home in the Bahamas. He was 16.

Gabriel: Disaster aid can benefit from technology

NEW YORK (AP)—Haiti's devastating earthquake reinforced Peter Gabriel's belief that disaster relief needs to take better advantage of the digital age. The 59-year-old singer-songwriter says technology has amazing potential and cell phones can help people send money to each other. Gabriel is a techie who has been involved in different online ventures. He says is encouraged that volunteers from across the globe have come together to assist the impoverished Caribbean nation, but says people need to understand that Haiti needs more than just temporary aid.

Family says preemie Duggar baby 'getting stronger'

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP)—Jim Bob and Michelle Duggar say their new baby - No. 19 - is doing well, even though she was born more than three months early and weighed less than 2 pounds at birth. The couple from northwest Arkansas says 7-week-old Josie Brooklyn is "growing and getting stronger each day." The Duggars and their children are featured on TLC's newly renamed reality show "19 Kids & Counting," which will showcase Josie's birth on a special episode Sunday night. Doctors say Josie was born Dec. 10 in Little Rock after Michelle Duggar had an emergency cesarean section because she'd developed preeclampsia. The baby had been due March 18.

Lindsay Lohan's father arrested again in New York

NEW YORK (AP)—Authorities say Lindsay Lohan's father has been arrested again. Police on New York's Long Island say Michael Lohan was arrested Thursday morning and charged with criminal contempt. Police did not provide further details. Bryan Konoski, an attorney for Lohan's ex-girlfriend Erin Muller, has told the New York Post that Lohan allegedly phoned Muller at work Jan. 21. That would violate an order of protection. Lohan had been arrested on a similar charge in December. In June, a judge said Lohan would avoid prosecution on an aggravated harassment charge if he stayed out of trouble for a year. Lohan denied he threatened to kill his girlfriend and himself if she left him. Lohan's attorney had said his client is the victim of fabrications. The actress reportedly is estranged from her father.

Chris Matthews on Obama: 'I forgot he was black'

NEW YORK (AP)—MSNBC's Chris Matthews says President Barack Obama has done so much to heal racial divisions that he "forgot he was black" while watching his State of the Union address. Those four words—"forgot he was black"—so instantly set the Twitter world afire that Matthews came back less than 90 minutes later Wednesday night to explain what he meant. The MSNBC commentator said it was noteworthy to him that a black president was addressing a room of mostly white people and how it didn't seem to be an issue. He said he saw it in the context of growing up at a time racial divisions were ever-present. Says Matthews: "I went in the room tonight, you could feel it wasn't there tonight and that takes leadership on his part, to get us beyond those divisions."

About 48 million watch Obama's State of the Union

LOS ANGELES (AP)—About 48 million viewers watched President Barack Obama's first State of the Union address on 11 networks, with Fox TV drawing the biggest share. The Nielsen Co. said viewership for Wednesday's speech was 7 percent lower than for President George W. Bush's first such address in 2002 but 5 percent higher than for President Bill Clinton's inaugural State of the Union speech in 1994. From 9-10 p.m. EST, more than 9.7 million people watched the hour-plus speech on Fox, with ABC drawing 7.6 million viewers, NBC 7.2 million and CBS 6.2 million, according to preliminary Nielsen figures Thursday. Those early numbers don't reflect West Coast viewership of the speech that aired at 5 p.m. PST. Among the cable news networks, Fox News was the leader with 5.7 million, followed by CNN with 3.3 million and MSNBC with 2.4 million. The speech also was carried live on Telemundo, Univision, BET and CNBC.

Teenager is bewildered by parents' short fuses

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My parents just aren't "there" for me anymore. I need to be able to go to them for advice, but now I can't. They get mad when I ask them for help on anything. I don't know what I'm doing wrong. I mean, I cook, clean, help around the house, but it doesn't seem to help.

Please don't get me wrong. I love my parents, but they get mad so easily. I'm not sure if it's because they're aging—they are 44 and 46—or if it's something I have done. I also feel like they aren't being fair to me because my siblings, who are younger AND older than I am, get more privileges than I do.

I just want a better relationship with my parents, the kind I had when I was younger. I mean, I haven't changed. (I only changed fashions. Like, I dress better and stuff.) Oh, and in case you're wondering, my parents don't drink or smoke.

So how do I talk to them in a way they will understand and consider thinking about my feelings without getting mad?

ANONYMOUS TEEN, PASCO, WASH.

DEAR TEEN: You may not be doing anything wrong. Many adults are under pressure in the workplace and/or financially—which can make them appear to be short-tempered and distracted. Your parents may also be trying to encourage you to think independently or be less reliant on them for advice. Maybe you should ask your parents what's wrong.

I don't know them, but at 44 and 46, I am sure their problem isn't "aging" because they are in the prime of their lives. However, if their problem is stress-related, the next time you want to discuss something serious, try it about an hour after dinner when they are relaxed and not distracted, and you may have better luck.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I recently attended a concert in the hall that is home to our local symphony orchestra. Imagine my dismay when the couple sitting behind me proceeded to unwrap candy, then crumple up and throw the wrappers on the floor.

It was, to say the least, distracting—and leaving the wrappers on the floor was low class. For pity's sake, folks, clean up after yourselves!

In this age of food allergies, eating peanut butter snacks in a crowded concert hall seems a doubly poor choice. Abby, would you please remind your readers to remember their manners during a live performance?

APPALLED IN AKRON, OHIO

DEAR APPALLED: Your frustration is understandable, and I hope your letter will serve as a reminder to concert- and theatergoers not to check their manners with their overcoats at the door.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I'm an 18-year-old, married Marine and expecting my first bundle of joy. I'm depressed. My job stresses me out a lot, and the thought of having to put my newborn in day care 10-plus hours a day is killing me.

I have been thinking about trying to get out so I can raise my child. My husband intends to stay in the service for life. Being stationed so far from home, I have no help and know little about raising a child. So I'm trying to figure out -- should I stay or try to get out?

MILITARY MOM-TO-BE IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

DEAR MILITARY MOM-TO-BE: Only you can make that decision, but before you do, there are two individuals I'm advising you to consult: The first is the officer in charge of your unit, and the second is your chaplain.

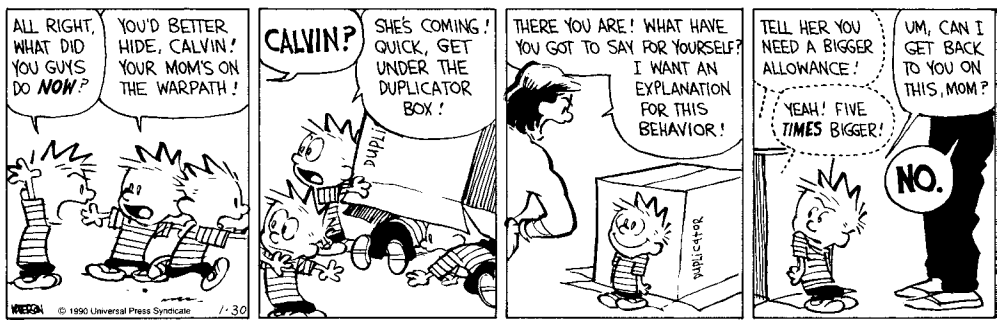
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


ALL RIGHT, WHAT DID YOU GUYS DO NOW?
YOU'D BETTER HIDE, CALVIN! YOUR MOM'S ON THE WARPATH!
CALVIN?
SHE'S COMING! QUICK, GET UNDER THE DUPLICATOR BOX!
JUPL!
THERE YOU ARE! WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO SAY FOR YOURSELF? I WANT AN EXPLANATION FOR THIS BEHAVIOR!
DUPLICATOR
TELL HER YOU NEED A BIGGER ALLOWANCE!
YEAH! FIVE TIMES BIGGER!
UM, CAN I GET BACK TO YOU ON THIS, MOM?
NO.
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1-30

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

I DID IT! IT TOOK ME ALL WEEK, BUT I FINALLY DID IT!
I FINISHED A SUDOKU!
PERHAPS YOU COULD CELEBRATE BY BATHING
© 2010 PAWS, INC. All Rights Reserved.
www.garfield.com
Distributed by Universal Uclick

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

HOW'D YOU GET STARTED IN THE GARBAGE BUSINESS?
I COME FROM A LONG LINE OF GARBAGEMEN.
GRANDPA WAS IN TRASH, DAD, MY UNCLES. EVERYONE BUT MY BROTHER, HE SHAMED THE FAMILY NAME.
PRISON?
NOPE. WORSE.
WORSE THAN PRISON?
YUP. HE RUNS A PAYDAY LOAN COMPANY.
OH, GOSH. SORRY.
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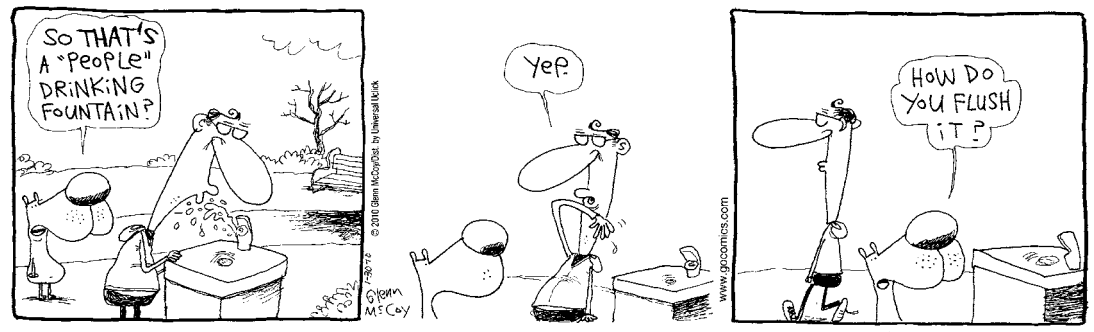
1-30

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Campus personnel
6 Bottomless pit
11 Revered answerer
12 Deliver a sermon
14 Light shade
15 Pie, e.g.
16 Spasm
17 Host
19 Tear
20 Birthright barterer
22 "Eureka!"
23 Yawn
24 Rivermouth feature
26 Rushes in with force
28 Recipe meas.
30 — generis
31 Vine of a sort
35 World-weary
39 Frau's man
40 Parcel of land
42 Squared
43 Lawyers' org.
44 Impersonate
46 Pismire
47 Anise-flavored liqueur
49 One of the clergy
51 Plagiarizes
52 Not kissproof
53 Wear away
54 Century components

DOWN

1 Laud
2 Scamp
3 Autumn mo.
4 Scoot
5 Alabama city
6 Seems to be
7 Highland hillside
8 "Absolutely"
9 Subordinate official
10 Scenario
11 Chose
13 Overadvertises
18 Actor McBride
21 Say
23 Duplicity
25 Venomous viper
27 Massage
29 Fur-trimmed cloak
31 Fellows
32 Money-back offer
33 Pencil part
34 Computer acronym
36 Personification
37 Men of La Mancha
38 Access
41 In one's cups
44 Temperate
45 Arrived
48 The way, to China?
50 Pirate's domain

Solution time: 27 mins.

C	O	R	E	R	■	P	T	A	■	P	O	P
A	R	O	M	A	■	E	R	G	■	A	V	E
B	R	A	I	N	■	B	O	A	S	T	E	R
■	■	S	T	U	B	B	Y	■	O	I	N	K
E	F	T	■	P	A	L	■	C	R	O	S	S
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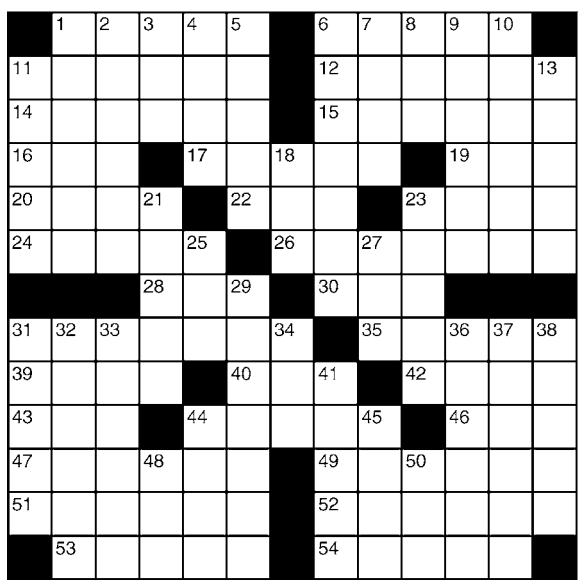
B	E	R	A	T	E	■	A	V	E	R	S	E
■	■	■	M	A	R	T	S	■	T	O	U	R
T	A	L	O	N	■	W	I	N	■	O	N	E
U	R	D	U	■	R	E	C	E	S	S	■	■
B	O	O	S	T	E	R	■	V	O	T	E	S
A	S	P	■	U	M	P	■	E	L	E	M	I
S	E	A	■	B	O	S	■	R	E	R	U	N

Yesterday's answer 1-30



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Khleo Thomas, 21; Wilmer Valderrama, 30; Christian Bale, 36; Phil Collins, 59

Happy Birthday: This is a passionate, creative year that you must take seriously. Embrace life and live each moment to the fullest. Don't let peer pressure or power struggles bring you down. Live and love and share your happiness with everyone. Your positive attitude will attract the help and support you need. 2, 14, 19, 24, 28, 35, 40

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): A strategic, disciplined approach to whatever you do will be required. Take on a physical challenge that will get your adrenalin flowing and your mind racing. Don't let anyone limit you. A romantic encounter is apparent. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Stay calm and get what needs to be done out of the way. Getting all worked up will only lead to setbacks. You may be questioned if you aren't completely honest about the way you feel. Try to compromise in order to keep the peace. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Plan your next vacation. It will give you greater incentive to work hard. Make friends with people who can offer an interesting way of doing things. An older relative or friend will have some very wise advice to share with you. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Take care of your debts and stop worrying about the past. Living in the present and looking positively toward the future will lessen your stress and help you advance. Don't shy away from change. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): A romantic encounter may be tempting but weigh the pros and cons before you decide to get involved. Someone will lead you on or tamper with your emotions if you are too trusting. Don't let anyone push you around or make decisions for you. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Don't believe everything you are told. Go to the source and find out first hand what's possible and what isn't. Spend time having fun with friends and you will release some pent-up frustrations. A change of plans will take you on an adventure. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Position yourself so that you can counteract any personal affront that comes your way. Don't meddle, just keep a watchful eye. Friends who offer positive input can contribute to your plans. Share your thoughts. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Do something that will contribute to your knowledge or skills. The more information you pick up, the more prepared you will be to counteract any negative reaction from someone you are close to. Do your best and don't look back. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Focus on finance and any lucrative proposition. You can expect to come into cash or be given a gift—don't let it slip through your fingers. A location change may seem appropriate but it will be a costly and unnecessary venture. ✪✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Someone who is anxious to have you make a commitment will pressure you. If you feel uncomfortable, back away. Feeling guilty or obliged should be your first hint that you are probably making a mistake. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't make waves and, most of all, refuse to meddle or get involved in someone else's fight. Focus on your own life. Deal promptly with any health concerns you have. A romantic encounter should brighten your day. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Opportunities will be present and must be taken advantage of before it's too late. An emotional lesson will be learned if you become involved with someone too fast. It's time to do things a little differently. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are engaging, personable, free-spirited and you live life to the fullest. You are imaginative and practical. You are strong-willed and compassionate.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

6								1
	3		1		8		7	
			2		3			
	2	8				5	1	
	7	6				4	2	
			7		2			
	9		8		5		3	
4								9

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

4	8	1	5	3	6	7	9	2
2	9	7	8	1	4	3	5	6
3	6	5	7	2	9	4	1	8
9	1	4	2	7	3	6	8	5
6	7	2	4	5	8	1	3	9
8	5	3	9	6	1	2	4	7
7	4	6	1	9	5	8	2	3
5	3	8	6	4	2	9	7	1
1	2	9	3	8	7	5	6	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/29

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

RESPECT CELL PHONE BANS WHILE DRIVING Solution: 9 letters

S	S	V	V	S	N	O	S	S	E	L	A	W	S	G
D	T	N	O	E	Y	R	T	E	G	D	A	G	N	T
E	E	N	O	I	H	S	E	N	O	H	P	I	P	E
L	E	V	E	I	C	I	K	D	R	I	V	E	R	S
E	R	R	I	M	T	E	C	I	L	O	P	O	O	D
C	T	S	F	C	E	I	I	L	M	S	A	M	H	A
T	S	T	P	D	E	C	T	S	E	D	E	O	I	E
R	A	U	B	E	N	S	N	E	S	A	L	N	B	H
O	F	D	U	R	A	A	K	U	P	A	C	I	I	E
N	E	Y	U	C	G	K	H	C	O	Ⓒ	P	T	T	F
I	R	L	T	R	E	B	E	E	U	N	Ⓐ	O	S	O
C	E	I	O	T	R	O	U	R	L	R	N	Ⓡ	B	R
S	O	U	R	O	S	I	V	S	O	P	T	A	Ⓢ	B
N	P	T	E	C	N	E	U	Q	E	S	N	O	C	I
S	H	L	A	G	E	L	L	I	S	S	U	E	S	D

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Action, Acts, Announcements, Bans, Buses, Cars, Consequence, Devices, Drivers, Electronics, Fines, Forbid, Free, Gadgetry, Groups, Hand, Headset, Help, Illegal, Issues, Laws, Lessons, Monitor, Moving, Pass, Petitions, Phones, Police, Prohibit, Roads, Rules, Safer, Speaker, Streets, Study, Teenagers, Tickets, Trucks, Vehicle, Visor, Voice

Yesterday's Answer: Speed

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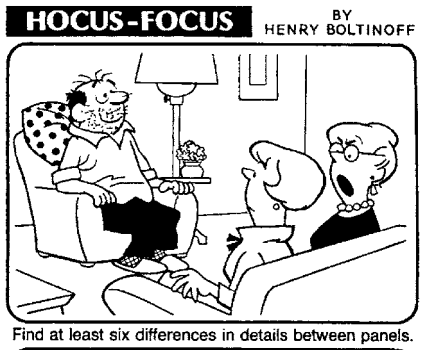
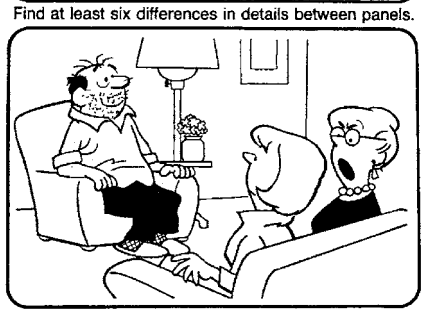
HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Pillow is missing. 2. Picture is wider. 3. Woman's hair is longer. 4. Bow is missing. 5. Vase is taller. 6. Table is missing.

Wishing Well®

2	3	2	7	5	7	8	4	2	8	3	7	4
Y	D	O	S	A	T	A	A	U	L	O	E	M
7	8	6	7	8	4	3	4	5	4	2	5	8
P	E	A	C	T	E	Y	S	I	S	A	D	T
3	7	2	5	7	4	8	2	5	8	3	8	4
O	A	R	O	R	C	E	E	T	R	U	F	L
8	5	2	3	7	3	8	6	7	5	2	7	4
R	H	A	R	E	V	O	I	F	E	P	U	E
2	7	2	3	4	3	8	4	8	4	7	2	8
P	L	R	E	A	R	M	R	A	S	L	E	L
3	7	8	2	3	2	3	5	8	2	6	8	3
Y	Y	O	C	B	I	E	R	V	A	M	E	S
2	5	2	3	2	8	6	8	6	8	6	8	6
T	S	E	T	D	D	H	O	I	N	G	E	H

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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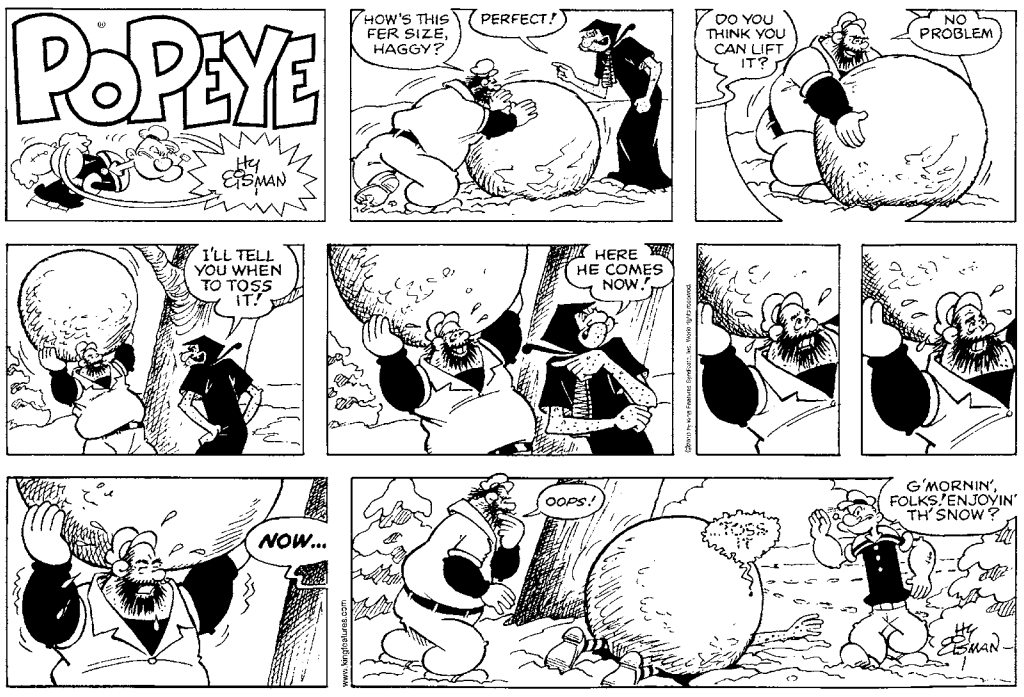
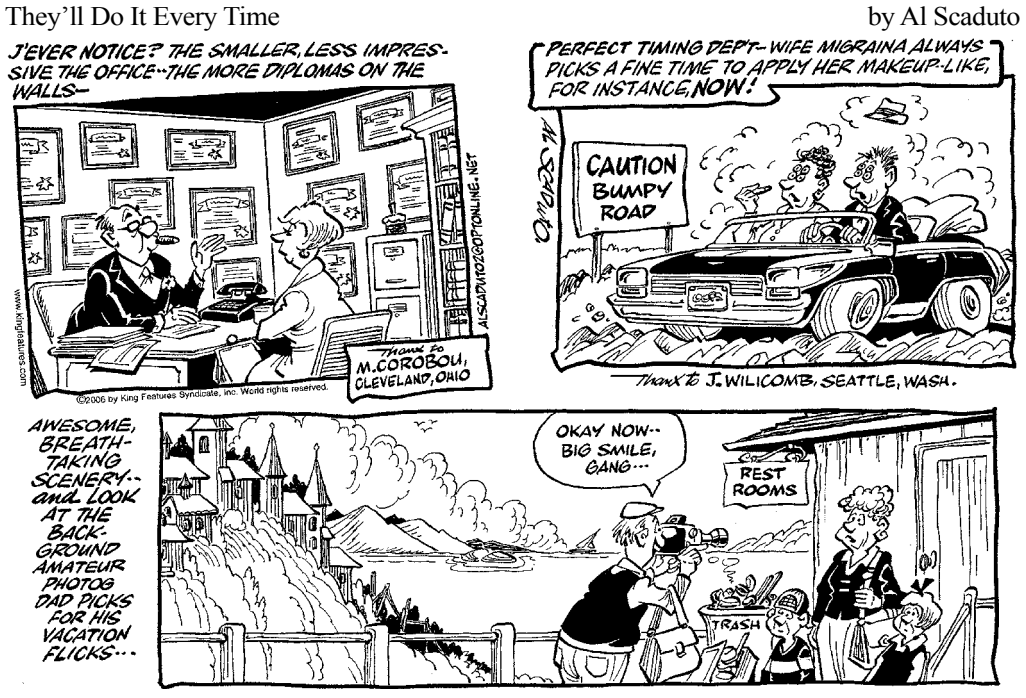


They'll Do It Every Time — by Al Scaduto


J'EVER NOTICE? THE SMALLER, LESS IMPRESSIVE THE OFFICE--THE MORE DIPLOMAS ON THE WALLS-
Thanx to M.COROBOU, CLEVELAND, OHIO
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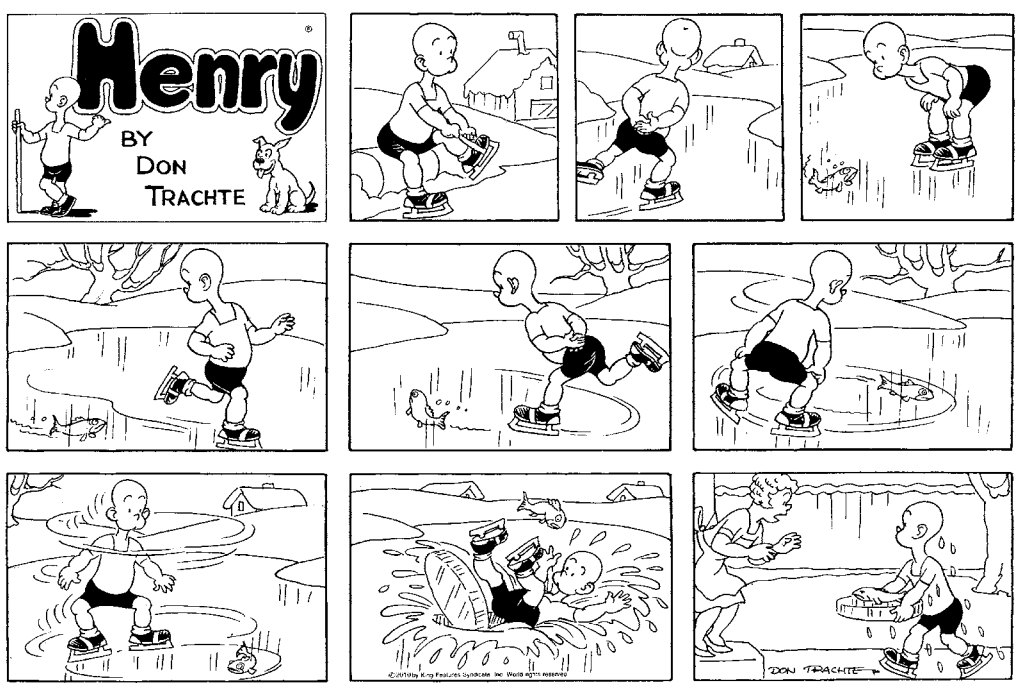
PERFECT TIMING DEPT.- WIFE MIGRAINA ALWAYS PICKS A FINE TIME TO APPLY HER MAKEUP-LIKE, FOR INSTANCE, NOW!
CAUTION BUMPY ROAD
Thanx to J. WILICOMB, SEATTLE, WASH.
AWESOME, BREATH-TAKING SCENERY-- and LOOK AT THE BACK-GROUND AMATEUR PHOTOG DAD PICKS FOR HIS VACATION FLICKS...
OKAY NOW-- BIG SMILE, GANG...
REST ROOMS
TRASH



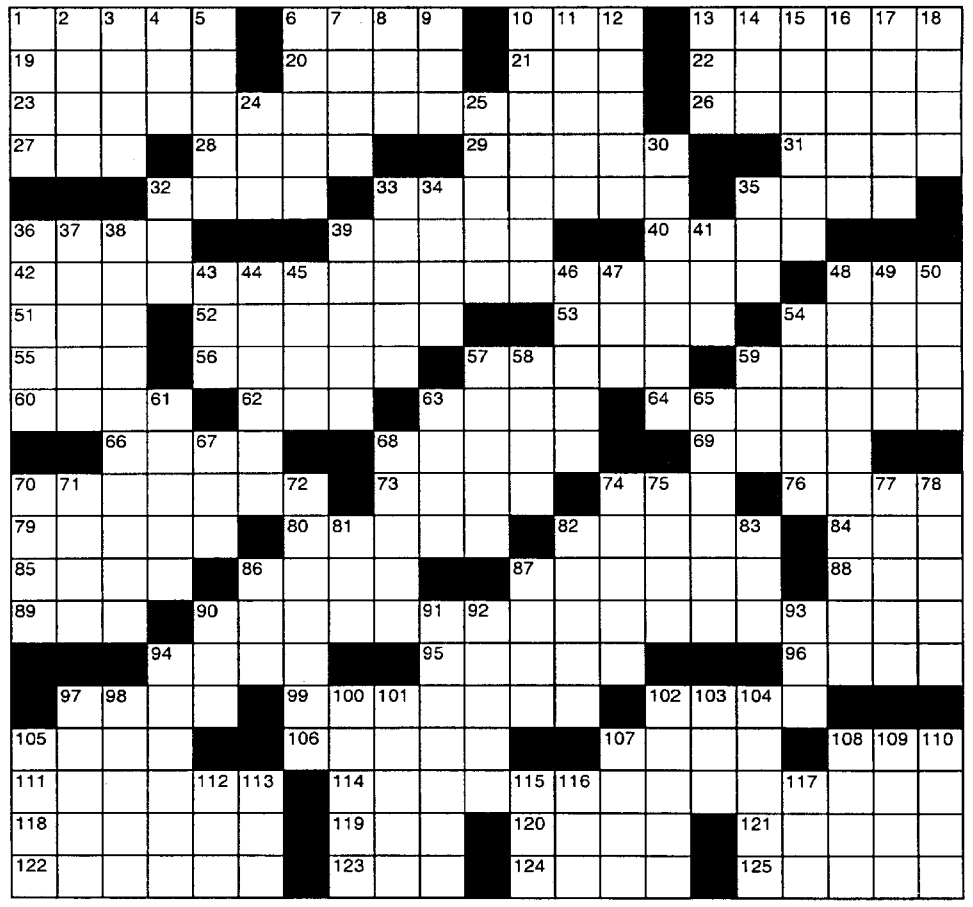
Super Crossword — MUSIC STAND

ACROSS

1 Teatime treat
6 Thin coin
10 Nav. rank
13 Bother
19 Hook on a hawk
20 Klutz's cry
21 Jean-Luc Godard
22 Fit for farming
23 Start of a definition of a perfectionist
26 Channel
27 Plead
28 Skeleton part
29 Elizabethan instruments
31 Yen
32 Relinquish
33 Occur earlier
35 To — (perfectly)
36 El —, TX
39 Puppeteer Lewis
40 TV's "— Street"
42 Part 2 of definition
48 WWII abbr.
51 Palm oil?
52 Aristocratic address
53 Duel tool
54 Metric measure
55 Relished a roast
56 Dismay
57 Chest material
59 Sun screen
60 Ulrich of Metallica
62 Caustic stuff
63 Ryan of "Boston Public"
64 Broke to smithereens
66 Thornfield governess
68 Part 3 of definition
69 Black
70 Sullivan's partner
73 — even keel
74 Heel
76 Impresses immensely
79 Confess
80 Helicopter part
82 Party present
84 Picnic pest
85 Authentic
86 Anapest, for one
87 Spanish title
88 Broadway letters
89 Prohibit
90 Part 4 of definition
94 Borscht ingredient
95 Diva Leontyne
96 Petty or Chandler
97 Stallion's sweetie
99 Mideastern kingdom
102 "The Ramayana," e.g.
105 — song (cheaply)
106 Casual cloth
107 School founded in 1440
108 Absorb, with "up"
111 "The Barber of Seville" heroine
114 End of definition
118 Carved a canyon
119 Sue — Langdon
120 — Linda, CA
121 Avid
122 Became rigid
123 Guitarist Paul
124 "— River" ('61 hit)
125 Be grateful

DOWN

1 Use a dirk
2 Drac's wrap
3 Couturier Cassini
4 Negative correlative
5 Follow
6 Metaphysical poet
7 Nebraska neighbor
8 Speedometer abbr.
9 "— Beso" ('62 hit)
10 Pianist Arrau
11 — del Este
12 Mid-size band
13 Contains
14 — deco
15 One in a million
16 Diminish
17 Pizza serving
18 Son of Adam
24 Time-honored
25 Office worker
30 "Georgy Girl" group
32 Pigeon English?
33 Med. professional
34 Unwelcome visit?
35 Donkey
36 Pansy part
37 "West Side Story" role
38 "The New Yorker" humorist
39 Where to find a plover
41 Positive vote
43 Singer Sumac
44 Steering device
45 Potter's need
46 Ancient Sanskrit
47 Mineral spring
48 Indecisive
49 Burn remedy
50 Firewood measure
54 One of the Aleutians
57 Chavez or Romero
58 "— go bragh!"
59 Rocker Morrison
61 Astrologer Leek
63 Mrs. Jupiter
65 Skater Ito
67 Postal abbr.
68 Club creed
70 Apparel
71 Concept
72 Pulled a sulky
74 Hiawatha's transport
75 Declare
77 Join up
78 Abolitionist author
81 Aah's partner
82 Use 53 Across
83 Hurried
86 "Pshaw!"
87 Vaudeville bit
90 Elfin
91 Revolts
92 Freddie the Freeloader, e.g.
93 Father Brown monogram
94 Pigtails
97 Boxer Archie
98 Fiery felony
100 Copper or cobalt
101 — fell swoop
102 Patriot Allen
103 Luau dish
104 Map feature
105 Worry
107 Admiral Zumwalt
108 Adventure story
109 Portent
110 Company car, e.g.
112 Born
113 Slap on
115 Shady character?
116 Leeds lavatory
117 Uh-uh



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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. TIME: A quadrennial refers to what period of time?
2. CARTOONS: Who was the voice of "Underdog" in the cartoon series?
3. GEOGRAPHY: In what U.S. state did the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain take place during the Civil War?
4. ASTRONOMY: What shape is the Milky Way galaxy?
5. LANGUAGE: What is the meaning of the Latin phrase, "Cogito ergo sum"?
6. MOVIES: What movie was Steven Spielberg's first major directorial effort?
7. LITERATURE: What is the name of the bookstore in Diagon Alley in the "Harry Potter" series?
8. EXPLORERS: Who was the first European to explore Greenland?
9. HISTORY: During what war did the Battle of Trafalgar take place?
10. MATH: What is the decimal equivalent of the fraction 3/5?

Amber Waves — by Dave T. Phipps

CLASS, TODAY WE ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT MARINE LIFE
WE'LL LOOK AT ALL KINDS OF FISH, WHAT THEIR HABITS ARE AND WHAT THEY EAT.
YOU WILL THEN PICK ONE AND ALSO WRITE ABOUT WHAT DANGERS THEY FACE
IT'S MY EXPERIENCE THEY TRY TO AVOID BEING FLUSHED

The Spats — by Jeff Pickering

Answers

1. Four years
2. Wally Cox
3. Georgia
4. Spiral
5. "I think, therefore I am"
6. "The Sugarland Express" (1974)
7. Flourish and Blotts
8. Eric the Red
9. Napoleonic Wars
10. .6000

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Saturday's Answers

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CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

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• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

mithandten

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Find today's solution in this section

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Saipan Tribune

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF RUBEN TORRES SILVESTRE, Deceased.	CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0489A NOTICE OF HEARING RE: SETTLING ESTATE OF LIMITED VALUE AND DIRECTING TRANSFER OF PERSONALITY (8 CMC §2501 ET SEQ.)

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that THELMA JAMER SILVESTRE has filed a Verified Petition to Settle Estate of Limited Value (8 CMC §2501 et seq.), in the above-captioned matter, and that her petition will be heard at the Superior Court, Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan on February 9, 2010, at 1:30 p.m. All persons objecting to the petition shall file objections with the Court prior to the date and time fixed for hearing, and shall serve copies of such objections, prior to the hearing on petitioner at the following address:

Thelma Jamer Silvestre, Petitioner
P.O. Box 8100 SVRB
Saipan, MP 96950

DATED this 29th day of January 2010.

/s/ Clerk of Courts

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Wizards hope to 'move forward' after Gilbert Arenas banned

WASHINGTON (AP)—As the remaining Washington Wizards went through what coach Flip Saunders called a "workmanlike practice" Thursday, life-size, color cutouts of Gilbert Arenas and Javaris Crittenton still were hanging on a wall overlooking the court.

A day after Arenas and Crittenton were suspended for the rest of the season by NBA commissioner David Stern for bringing guns to the locker room, the Wizards set out to, as Saunders put it, "move forward."

"We've become at times ... emotionally and mentally worn down," Saunders said. "It's almost like a boxer: You continue to take body punches, and eventually what it does, it just wears you down."

Saunders said the "waiting and not knowing" what Stern's ruling would be was in some ways more difficult than hearing the news Wednesday.

"At least there's some closure, from the standpoint of the team, and trying to put it behind us as best we can," the coach said. "Once you find out and you know, it's easier to say, 'OK, this is where we're at, and this is what we're going to have to do.'"

Arenas and Crittenton each admitted bringing a gun into the Wizards' locker room—violating a provision added to the NBA's collective bargaining agreement in 2005—after a dispute stemming from a card game on a team flight. Stern said the players expressed remorse, but added, "Nevertheless, there is no justification for their conduct."

Saunders said he's been communicating with Arenas.

"I know he's hurting. He's texted me, and he's called, and we've talked," Saunders said. "He's just mentioned from the standpoint that he's felt that he's let me down at times, and I think he understands the magnitude of what's happened."

Arenas already had been suspended indefinitely Jan. 6; Crittenton hadn't played in a game this season because of an injury.

Washington's first game since the final punishment will be Friday at the New Jersey Nets, the only team in the Eastern Conference with a worse record than the Wizards' 14-30 mark.

Despite how the season has gone so far, on and off the court, Wizards players Antawn Jamison and Brendan Haywood both spoke Thursday about holding out hope of contending for a playoff spot.

"I'm not happy. This is an embarrassment. To go through the things that we went through this year and to have the expectations that we expected to have as a group and to be where we're at right now—this is a very disappointing season," Jamison said. "But the thing about it—we're still going to compete. We're still going to go out there and play. We still believe that there's a chance for us making the playoffs."

Lewis' layup caps Magic's win over Celtics

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—The play designed for Vince Carter was being shredded. J.J. Redick stood near midcourt, swarmed by defenders, unable to make the pass with the clock about to run out on an improbable come back.

Instead, Rashard Lewis caught the ball and surprised everybody.

Lewis made the go-ahead layup with 1.3 seconds remaining, and the Orlando Magic overcame a 16-point deficit to beat the Boston Celtics 96-94 on Thursday night.

"Turned the corner with my right hand, took it to the basket and was expecting the defense to collapse," he said. "I was surprised when I turned to the basket there was nobody there."

Not one to pass up a 3-point shot, Lewis took the ball after a broken play and sprinted down the baseline past Kevin Garnett for the uncontested layup. Rasheed Wallace missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer, giving the Magic their second victory in three games against the Celtics this season.

Lewis led the Magic with 23 points, and Dwight Howard overcome early foul trouble to finish with 19 points and 10 rebounds, including 11 points in the fourth quarter.

Ray Allen had 20 points, and Wallace added 17 for the Celtics, who took a big lead on potent 3-point shooting but wilted from outside in the final period.

"We deserved it," Celtics coach Doc Rivers said. "I thought we completely lost our focus. An 11-point lead at halftime, I told them it was a joke. We should've been up by 25 points."

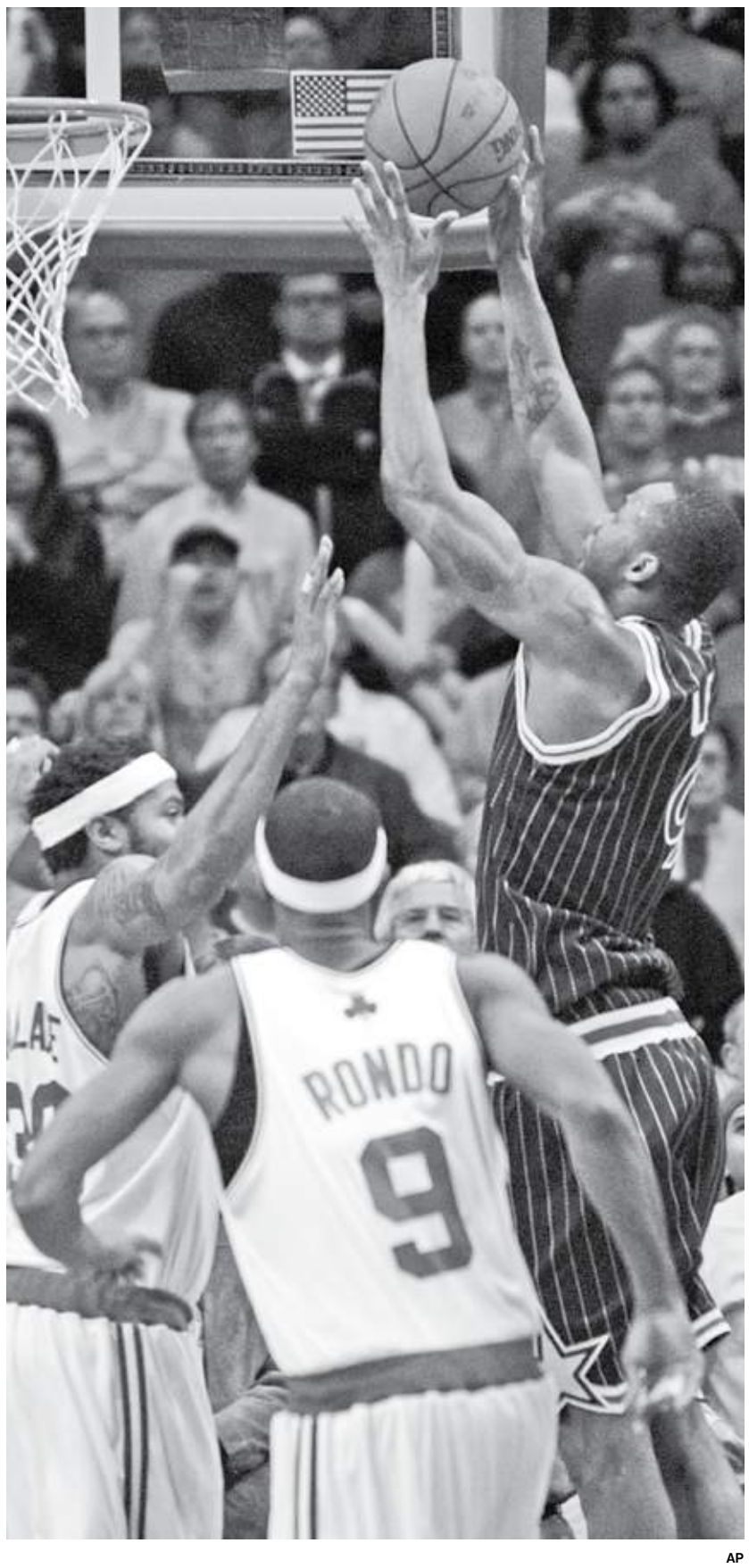
Boston players were just as upset.

"I can't explain that one," Garnett said. "Tough loss. We had them right where we wanted them and let it slip away."

The Magic came back with a lineup that featured centers Howard and Marcin Gortat. The rare pairing paid off for Orlando.

They stifled Boston defensively and hooked up on a nifty alley-oop that Howard finished with a powerful dunk. Gortat even gave Orlando its first lead with a 17-foot jumper off the glass, making it 84-83 with 4:52 remaining.

"Defensively, I think we are killing them," Gortat said about playing with Howard. "There's no way they can stop us defensively with two big men like that."



AP

Orlando Magic forward Rashard Lewis, right, goes up for the game-winning basket in front of Boston Celtics forward Rasheed Wallace, left, and Rajon Rondo (9) at the end of the second half of an NBA basketball game in Orlando, Fla., Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010.

The once punishing defensive game became a furious, frantic push to the buzzer with each team matching shot for shot.

Paul Pierce's 3-pointer from the wing put Boston back in front 92-91. Wallace then blocked a shot by Carter and later stole it from Orlando's shooting guard before Rajon Rondo hit a running layup to give Boston a 94-91 lead.

But Redick answered with a 3-pointer rolling off a screen to tie it, and he contested a 3-pointer by Allen to give Orlando the chance for the win in regulation.

On the final Magic possession, Redick tried to get the ball to Carter but was surrounded by defenders. Eventually Lewis got the ball in the corner and went past Garnett for the winner.

"Rashard saved me," Magic coach Stan Van Gundy said. "We couldn't get Vince the ball, it was a poorly designed play and Rashard bailed my butt out."

Suns 112, Mavericks 106

In Phoenix, reserves Goran Dragic, Jared Dudley and Louis Amundson led an unlikely Phoenix comeback with 14 fourth-quarter points that sank Dallas.

Dragic finished with 13 points, Amundson had 12, and Dudley eight.

Amare Stoudemire had 22 points before spending the entire fourth quarter on the bench, Steve Nash added 19 points and 11 assists, and Jason Richardson had 17 points to help the Suns snap a three-game losing streak against the Mavericks.

Jason Terry led Dallas with 19 points, and Dirk Nowitzki had 17. Nowitzki played in his 884th game to surpass Brad Davis as Dallas' career leader.

Raptors 106, Knicks 104

In New York, Toronto won a fourth straight game, edging New York.

All-Star Chris Bosh had 27 points and 15 rebounds, while Hedo Turkoglu set season highs with 26 points and 11 rebounds.

Jarrett Jack made one of two free throws in the final seconds and drew a charging call on Al Harrington on New York's final possession.

New York was led by David Lee's 29 points and 18 rebounds.

Chris Bosh, 7 first-timers headed to All-Star game

NEW YORK (AP)—Local products Chris Bosh of Toronto and Utah's Deron Williams are headed back to Dallas for the All-Star game, which will include seven first-time selections.

The Boston Celtics and Atlanta Hawks each had two players picked as reserves Thursday for the Feb. 14 game at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington. Paul Pierce and Rajon Rondo were chosen from the Celtics, while the Hawks are sending Joe Johnson and Al Horford.

Rondo and Horford will both make their first All-Star appearances, as will Oklahoma City swingman Kevin Durant, Charlotte's Gerald Wallace, Memphis forward Zach Randolph, Chicago's Derrick Rose and Williams, who played at The Colony High School near Dallas.

Among those missing out were New York's David Lee and Clippers center Chris Kaman.

Bosh, a Dallas native, is an All-Star for the fifth straight season, tying Vince Carter for the most appearances in Raptors history.

"Just to be able to be an All-Star year in and year out, that's a special feeling, but the fact that it's in Dallas is kind of a bittersweet thing," Bosh said before the Raptors faced the New York Knicks. "Sweet because I get to play in front of my home crowd and it's bitter because everybody wants tickets."

Bosh, Pierce and Johnson are the only reserves on the Eastern Conference roster with All-Star game experience.

"There's going to come a day that they don't pick me," Pierce said in Orlando, where the Celtics are facing the Magic. "So every time I get a chance to make it, it's definitely an honor."

The remainder of the Western Conference reserves were guards Chris Paul of New Orleans and Brandon Roy of Portland, Lakers forward Pau Gasol and Mavericks forward Dirk Nowitzki, who was picked for the ninth time and will represent the home team.

"It is an honor to represent the Mavericks in my new hometown of Dallas," Nowitzki said. "I am always thankful for the opportunity to play in the All-Star game. We hope to put on a good show for our fans."

The reserves were chosen by the head coaches from each conference, who weren't allowed to vote for their own players. They had to select two guards, two forwards, one center and two players regardless of position.

They leaned toward winning in the East, where the Celtics and Hawks have the second- and third-best records behind Cleveland. That certainly helped Rondo, who has been as important to Boston as any of its Big Three this season.

"I always thought I was (an All-Star)," Rondo said. "For the coaches to think so, it's an honor. I try to play with the spirit and that tenacity every night."

Horford likely edged out Lee, who is averaging 19.4 points and 11.4 rebounds for a Knicks team far below .500. Horford is averaging 13.6 points and 9.8 boards.

"It's out of my control and Coach (Mike D'Antoni) always tells me to try to control the things I can control and I think the overall message was that nobody was taken off a team with a sub-.500 record," Lee said. "So that means one thing: We've got to get some more victories, and that's what we'll go after right now."

Also left out was a second Cleveland player behind LeBron James. The Cavs felt point guard Mo Williams should have been selected—though he is injured, anyway.

Allenby best on the toughest course

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Scott Piercy had the best score Thursday at Torrey Pines because he made nine birdies. Robert Allenby might have had the best round because he made no bogeys.

Adding to the complexity at the Farmers Insurance Open was Phil Mickelson. He was so excited to get his season started that he played with caution, yet one of his best birdies came after he hit his tee shot into the parking lot.

A glorious day along the Pacific coast ended under a clear sky, even if nothing about the leaderboard will clear up until the weekend. The tournament is played on two courses that couldn't be more different—the North Course is 712 yards shorter than the South Course, which hosted a U.S. Open two years ago.

Piercy played the North and watched his scores go south in a round of 8-under 64. He made seven birdies on the front nine and even entertained thoughts of a 59 until a bogey on his 11th hole. He was not the least bit devastated.

"I shoot 59 every day," Piercy said. "I just have to keep on going, usually."

He had a one-shot lead over Ben Crane, Chris Tidland, Ryuji Imada and Matt Every, with Tom Pernice Jr. another shot back after a 66. They all played the North Course, and will have to tackle the big South on Friday.

That's what made Allenby's round so impressive.

One of the hottest players in golf, Allenby made a couple of big par saves late in his day to protect a bogey-free round of 67, making him the only player among the top 15 after the opening round to play on the South.

He felt as though he were leading the tournament, even if he was tied for seventh.

"I gauge myself off this golf course," Allenby said. "This is a real golf course. If it wasn't, they wouldn't have had a U.S. Open here. I don't want to say the other course is Mickey Mouse because that would be rude. But it's Mickey Mouse-ish."

Robert Allenby, of Australia, reacts to just missing a birdie putt on the fifth hole of the south course during the opening round of the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament at Torrey Pines Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010 in San Diego.

AP

Ryan Palmer, who beat Allenby on the final hole in Honolulu two weeks ago, played in the group behind him and would have joined him with the low score on the South if not for a bogey on the 17th. Even so, Palmer was thrilled with his start, and couldn't help but notice the "NC"—North Course—listed next to all the names on the electronic leaderboard.

"There's definitely a lot of North Course scores," he said. "I'm fortunate to play well on this golf course. I'm happy to get out of there with a round under par."

Palmer was particularly thrilled with a par on the eighth hole, a par 3 with a shallow green. He was between clubs, so he measured two club-lengths on the tee box with his driver to move back and hit a 6-iron. Didn't matter. He still flew the green and was on the back slope of a bunker, trying to get close to a back pin. He bunted the shot into the rough and watched it barely climb onto the green, then made the par putt from 20 feet and felt as good as any of his birdies.

He played in front of the largest gallery, mainly because of the company he kept—Mickelson, the No. 2 player in the world who is getting plenty of attention this year as someone who could give golf a boost during the indefinite break of Tiger Woods.

They had the biggest crowd, even if it never topped more than about 750 people. The cheers for the occasional birdie were not enough to offset the military jets zooming out to the sea from nearby Miramar.

Mickelson played a steady hand in his round of 70.

"I was a little more cautious today because I didn't want to make too many big mistakes," Mickelson said. "I want to work my way into the tournament. (Jack) Nicklaus used to talk about that in majors, that he wanted to try to progress as the week went along, and I didn't want to try to come out and win the tournament on Thursday, because it's just not possible.

"I'm hoping I play better tomorrow and shoot a low score on the North, good enough to get myself in contention for the weekend."

Mickelson had a pair of bogeys from the fairway bunkers, and a three-putt bogey on the 10th. What helped was his exceptional play on the par 5s. He reached three of them with his second shot to set up two-putt birdies.

The other came on the 614-yard ninth.

Mickelson watched his drive sail way to the left, over a green-mesh fence along the fairway. He hit a provisional tee shot, then had a rules official meet him at the fence. Sure enough, his ball landed in a makeshift parking lot outside the Scripps medical clinic. Because the parking lot is considered a temporary immovable obstruction, he was given a free drop, and ultimately made a 12-foot birdie putt.

He sure wasn't thinking birdie as his tee shot cleared the fence.

"Probably unlikely, I would say," Mickelson said, grinning. "I've been over there before, and I had a pretty good idea that the parking lot was a temporary immovable obstruction. So I was able to get relief."

More relief should come Friday on the North Course, which played more than 2 1/2 shots easier.

Jets QB Sanchez could opt for left knee surgery

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. (AP)—New York Jets quarterback Mark Sanchez might have surgery this offseason to stabilize the patella ligament in his left knee, which was injured during college.

Sanchez, who just completed his rookie season, won't need any procedures on his right knee, which sustained a sprained posterior cruciate ligament earlier this season.

He had both knees examined by team doctors this week, and also had them looked at by Dr. James Andrews in Birmingham, Ala., on Wednesday.

General manager Mike Tannenbaum said Sanchez would be ready "well before training camp" if he elects to have the procedure, which isn't considered major, but could miss some early offseason workouts.

"It would certainly be much sooner than later because, right now, nothing has been decided," Tannenbaum said Thursday. "So, we're going to keep the lines of communication open and make a decision pretty soon here."

Sanchez dislocated his kneecap during the first week of fall practice before his junior season at Southern California. He has worn a brace on the knee since, even in the pros. Sanchez also banged up his left knee against Carolina on Nov. 29.

"You don't want to have anybody miss any time, especially a young quarterback," Tannenbaum said, "but we'll balance it out with a medical procedure that may give him more stability in there and give him a chance to play without any worry about that."

Sanchez's right knee, injured against Buffalo on Dec. 3 in Toronto, will heal through rehabilitation.

"I think everyone's on the same page," Tannenbaum said. "It's not going to be anything major."

Sanchez injured the right knee when he dived headfirst on an 8-yard run early in the third quarter against the Bills. The play came a few days after coach Rex Ryan brought in Yankees manager Joe Girardi to help teach Sanchez how to improve his sliding technique.

He missed one game when Ryan kept him home for the trip to Tampa Bay on Dec. 13, and was replaced by Kellen Clemens. Sanchez returned the following week against Atlanta wearing a brace, and had no apparent signs of injury during the last several weeks of the season.

He helped lead the Jets to the AFC championship game at Indianapolis, playing some of his best football during the playoff run. After throwing 20 interceptions during the regular season, Sanchez had just two in three postseason games and fell a win short of becoming the first rookie quarterback to start in the Super Bowl.

The fifth overall pick last year out of USC, Sanchez finished the regular season throwing for 2,444 yards and 12 touchdowns, but had a dismal 63.0 quarterback rating.

Armed with a color-coded system and numbered plays on his wrist to help him, Sanchez took much better care of the ball down the stretch. He finished the playoffs going 41 of 68 for 539 yards with four touchdowns and a 92.7 rating.

Sanchez also joined Baltimore's Joe Flacco as the only rookie quarterbacks to win two playoff games.

Williams sisters win doubles title

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Venus and Serena Williams won their fourth Australian Open women's doubles title, beating Cara Black and Liezel Huber 6-4, 6-3.

The Williams broke Huber's serve to open the second set Friday and won the match when they again broke Huber, ending it on Serena's winning reflex volley. The sisters high-fived each other at the side of the court after the match.

The Williams sisters won the Australian title for the first time in 2001 and added championships in 2003 and last year. Black, from Zimbabwe, and Huber, a South African-born American citizen, won the 2007 title.

"I have to congratulate Venus and Serena for a great tournament - you guys are too good," Black said.

It was the 11th time the Williams sisters have combined for a Grand Slam doubles title.

Serena has 11 singles majors, also, and is hoping for a 12th in the Australian Open final on Saturday against Justine Henin.

"I look forward to more titles," Serena Williams said.

The Williams sisters broke to go up 4-3. Serena Williams faced two break points on her serve in the next game before she held.

With Venus Williams serving for the set, the sisters took the opener when Black netted a forehand on a second set point.

Venus Williams also has won a mixed-doubles title at the Australian Open—in 1998 with fellow American Jason Gimelstob. Serena Williams was a losing finalist in mixed doubles with Max Mirnyi of Belarus in 1999.

Black is still in this year's mixed-doubles tournament, playing the semifinals later with Leander Paes of India against Lisa Raymond of the United States and Wesley Moodie of South Africa. Paes and Black are the top-seeded team.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	29	14	.674	–
Toronto	25	22	.532	6
New York	18	27	.400	12
Philadelphia	15	30	.333	15
New Jersey	4	40	.091	25 1/2

Southeast Division

Atlanta	29	15	.659	–
Orlando	30	16	.652	–
Miami	23	22	.511	6 1/2
Charlotte	22	22	.500	7
Washington	14	30	.318	15

Central Division

Cleveland	36	11	.766	–
Chicago	22	22	.500	12 1/2
Milwaukee	19	25	.432	15 1/2
Indiana	16	30	.348	19 1/2
Detroit	15	29	.341	19 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	30	16	.652	–
San Antonio	26	18	.591	3
Memphis	25	19	.568	4
New Orleans	25	20	.556	4 1/2
Houston	24	21	.533	5 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	31	14	.689	–
Utah	27	18	.600	4
Portland	27	20	.574	5
Oklahoma City	24	21	.533	7
Minnesota	9	38	.191	23

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	35	11	.761	–
Phoenix	27	21	.563	9
L.A. Clippers	20	25	.444	14 1/2
Sacramento	16	28	.364	18
Golden State	13	31	.295	21

Yesterday's Games

Toronto 106, New York 104
Orlando 96, Boston 94
Phoenix 112, Dallas 106

NBA LEADERS

SCORING

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Anthony, DEN	38	384	327	1130	29.7
James, CLE	47	473	359	1389	29.6
Durant, OKC	45	434	384	1317	29.3
Bryant, LAL	46	480	281	1301	28.3
Wade, MIA	45	434	315	1229	27.3
Ellis, GOL	42	429	199	1090	26.0
Nowitzki, DAL	44	398	284	1109	25.2
Bosh, TOR	46	387	321	1101	23.9
Roy, POR	40	328	213	924	23.1
Jamison, WAS	35	286	139	766	21.9
Johnson, ATL	44	370	123	938	21.3
Randolph, MEM	44	368	182	923	21.0
Evans, SAC	40	304	201	830	20.8
Stoudemire, PHX	47	366	235	967	20.6
Maggette, GOL	43	279	315	882	20.5
Gay, MEM	42	324	174	856	20.4
Jackson, CHA	44	322	182	889	20.2
Kaman, LAC	41	345	138	828	20.2
Duncan, SAN	41	320	174	814	19.9
Rose, CHI	44	369	127	869	19.8

FG PERCENTAGE

	FG	FGA	PCT
Perkins, BOS	202	319	.633
Gasol, MEM	246	407	.604
Howard, ORL	253	422	.600
Hilario, DEN	241	411	.586
Horford, ATL	250	435	.575
Bynum, LAL	281	491	.572
Millsap, UTA	194	350	.554
Stoudemire, PHX	366	661	.554
Lee, NYK	356	643	.554
Landry, HOU	261	474	.551

REBOUNDS

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Howard, ORL	45	169	428	597	13.3
Noah, CHI	43	167	353	520	12.1
Camby, LAC	44	136	384	520	11.8
Randolph, MEM	44	202	307	509	11.6
Lee, NYK	44	111	391	502	11.4
Bosh, TOR	46	139	379	518	11.3
Wallace, CHA	43	87	384	471	11.0
Duncan, SAN	41	134	308	442	10.8
Boozer, UTA	45	86	396	482	10.7
Haywood, WAS	43	185	272	457	10.6

ASSISTS

	G	AST	AVG
Paul, NOR	37	412	11.1
Nash, PHX	47	517	11.0
Rondo, BOS	41	397	9.7
Williams, UTA	41	391	9.5
Kidd, DAL	44	407	9.3
B. Davis, LAC	45	362	8.0
James, CLE	47	370	7.9
Westbrook, OKC	45	330	7.3
Arenas, WAS	32	230	7.2
Duhon, NYK	44	279	6.3

FARMERS INSURANCE OPEN SCORES

SAN DIEGO (AP) – Scores Thursday from the Farmers Insurance Open, a $5.3 million US PGA Tour event at two par-72 Torrey Pines courses; 7,698-yard s-South and 6,986-yard n-North:

FIRST ROUND

Scott Piercy	29-35–64n
Ben Crane	34-31–65n
Chris Tidland	32-33–65n
Ryuji Imada	34-31–65n
Matt Every	32-33–65n
Tom Pernice, Jr.	32-34–66n
Robert Allenby	34-33–67s
Boo Weekley	32-35–67n
Steve Lowery	34-33–67n
Vance Veazey	34-33–67n
Josh Teater	32-35–67n
Ricky Barnes	35-32–67n
Rickie Fowler	34-33–67n
Tom Gillis	34-33–67n
Alex Prugh	35-32–67n
Marc Leishman	34-34–68s
Nicholas Thompson	34-34–68n
Chris Couch	33-35–68n
Ryan Palmer	32-36–68s
D.A. Points	35-33–68n
Rich Beem	35-33–68n
Blake Trimble	32-36–68n
Rocco Mediate	35-34–69n
J.P. Hayes	35-34–69n
Pat Perez	34-35–69s
Daniel Chopra	32-37–69n
Ted Purdy	33-36–69n
Shane Bertsch	34-35–69n
Matt Bettencourt	33-36–69n
David Lutterus	33-36–69n
Michael Connell	33-36–69s
Troy Merritt	33-36–69n
Cameron Percy	33-36–69n
Fran Quinn	36-33–69n
George McNeill	34-35–69s
Jason Dufner	34-35–69n
Andres Romero	33-36–69n
Blake Adams	36-33–69n
Spencer Levin	34-35–69n
Jeff Klauk	35-35–70n
Phil Mickelson	35-35–70s
Luke Donald	36-34–70s
Garth Mulroy	33-37–70n
Matt Jones	34-36–70s
Graham DeLaet	34-36–70s
Derek Lamely	35-35–70s
Chris Riley	34-36–70n
Harrison Frazar	36-34–70n
Bubba Watson	34-36–70n
J.J. Henry	34-36–70n
Ernie Els	36-34–70s
Ryan Moore	34-36–70n
Bill Haas	36-34–70n
John Rollins	36-34–70s
Brendon de Jonge	35-35–70s
Justin Bolli	36-34–70n
Charles Howell III	35-36–71s
Brandt Snedeker	33-38–71s
Fredrik Jacobson	33-38–71s
Joe Ogilvie	35-36–71n
Michael Letzig	35-36–71n
Paul Goydos	35-36–71n
Chad Campbell	35-36–71s
Richard S. Johnson	34-37–71s
Michael Bradley	34-37–71n
Justin Rose	37-34–71n
Jeff Quinney	37-34–71n
Michael Putnam	35-36–71s
Andrew McLardy	36-35–71s
James Driscoll	37-34–71s
John Mallinger	35-36–71n
Greg Owen	36-35–71n
Charlie Wi	35-36–71s
Scott McCarron	36-35–71n
Lucas Glover	35-36–71s
Martin Laird	37-34–71n
Nick Watney	36-35–71n
Tim Herron	35-36–71s
John Merrick	35-36–71n
Bryce Molder	37-34–71s
Brenden Pappas	36-35–71s
Jason Day	36-36–72s
Rod Pampling	38-34–72s
Steve Marino	36-36–72s
Greg Chalmers	35-37–72n
K.J. Choi	34-38–72s
Nathan Green	36-36–72n
Dustin Johnson	36-36–72n
Will MacKenzie	36-36–72s
Chez Reavie	37-35–72s
J.B. Holmes	33-39–72s
Carl Pettersson	37-35–72n
Michael Allen	36-36–72s
Jerod Turner	36-36–72s
Rich Barcelo	38-34–72n
Chris Wilson	37-35–72n
Billy Horschel	37-35–72n
Chad Collins	35-37–72n
Mathew Goggin	36-36–72s
Alex Cejka	34-38–72s
Bill Lunde	34-38–72n
Johnson Wagner	35-37–72s
Hunter Mahan	36-36–72s
Jay Williamson	36-36–72n
Garrett Willis	35-37–72n
Craig Bowden	35-37–72s
Michael Sim	35-38–73s
Ben Curtis	38-35–73n
Jesper Parnevik	37-36–73s
Jonathan Byrd	37-36–73s
Brett Quigley	36-37–73s
Mark Wilson	37-36–73s
Troy Matteson	37-36–73s
Arjun Atwal	37-36–73n
Gunner Wiebe	35-38–73s
Omar Uresti	38-36–74s
Charley Hoffman	39-35–74n
Brad Adamonis	36-38–74s
Robert Garrigus	40-34–74n
Tommy Armour III	39-35–74s
Roger Tambellini	36-38–74s
Martin Flores	36-38–74s
Chris Baryla	38-36–74s
Cameron Tringale	36-38–74s
Nathan Tyler	38-36–74n
Estanisiao Guerrero	39-35–74n
John Huston	37-37–74s
Kevin Sutherland	39-35–74s
Lee Janzen	37-37–74n
Greg Kraft	38-36–74s
Mark Calcavecchia	36-38–74s
Stephen Ames	39-35–74s
Henrik Bjornstad	36-38–74s
Gregory Casagranda	37-37–74n
Brent Delahoussaye	39-35–74n
Stuart Appleby	39-36–75s
Marc Turnesa	38-37–75s
Aaron Baddeley	38-37–75s
Roland Thatcher	39-36–75n
Kevin Streelman	38-37–75s
Jimmy Walker	40-35–75s
Jeff Overton	38-37–75s
Kris Blanks	37-38–75s
Parker McLachlin	37-39–76s
Tim Petrovic	38-38–76s
Jeff Gove	38-38–76s
Kevin Johnson	38-38–76s
Steve Wheatcroft	38-38–76n
Kevin Stadler	38-39–77s
Billy Mayfair	42-36–78s
Aron Price	41-38–79s
John Daly	39-40–79s
James Nitties	39-41–80s
Steve Flesch	38-42–80s
Tim Parun	41-40–81n

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Soul Rebels, Fanians starts finals series today

Soul Rebels and Fanians will dispute the 2009-2010 World Organized Rocball Community League championship starting today.

The best-of-three affair transpired after three playoff games of Saipan's indigenous sport were played at the Marianas High School Gymnasium last weekend.

In the first game, No Mercy and One Way played to break the tie for the fourth place in playoffs.

One Way and No Mercy exchanged wins in the first and second sets before the former won the third set and juiced out with a 60-38 victory.

The second game then saw Soul Rebels of master blasters Ben Lisua and John Nekaifes take on new kids on the block Kagman Projects.

Soul Rebels came out firing and won the first set, 21-2. Kagman Projects, however, rebounded nicely with a 22-12 victory in the second and a 21-10 win in the third.

But Lisua, Nekaifes, and company wouldn't go down without a fight and won the fourth set, 21-9, to win the match and earn a finals slot.

In the last game of the night, One Way came back after their victory over No Mercy and challenged the Fanians for the last spot for today's best-of-three championship games.

The game between One Way and Fanians was a see-saw game wherein each team won two sets each.

In the third set, One Way edged out the Fanians. One Way's victory in the third set leveled the game at 48-all.

Fanians then came back in the fourth set, wining 21-12 that set up their finals tiff against Soul Rebels. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

NONI

From Page 28

at the end of the first period, 18-23, and the Joey Siriban-coached team cut the lead to four at the break, 42-46.

Noni finally grabbed the driver's seat in the third period, 69-68, behind Kae Bernardo's 11 points and one triple each from Jun Pantaleon, Wowie Abuel, and Bon Tamayo.

The opening minutes of the fourth quarter was a seesaw battle until Saipan Fresh began missing shots and committing fouls, while Noni continued to hit baskets from outside and later sealed the win from the foul line. Noni scored 16 of their last 21 points from the stripe.

Saipan Fresh took an early double-digit lead with Lerio Pagarao's guns blazing and with its defense clogging Noni's passing lanes at the wings.

However, Noni turned the tables on Saipan Fresh in the second half, as the latter had a hard time making baskets inside, while the former's gunners were on target. It did not help Saipan Fresh's cause that Pagarao missed almost half of the third period in favor of Ryan Sanciangco and stayed on the bench in the first few minutes of the fourth canto.

Ebisuya, meanwhile, avoided suffering the same misfortune when it launched an 11-2 run in a span of two minutes in the fourth period.

A Sonny Ebuen triple tied the game at 60-all, with 5:57 left on the clock. Moises answered with his own triple to break the deadlock and anchored an Ebisuya rally. Moises later connected on two layups, while Amor Casabuena made two fastbreak baskets to up the lead to nine, 71-62.

Ebisuya pulled away further and fan favorite Rico Morales put the finishing touches on the team's 19-point win, drilling a triple that drew loud cheers from the crowd.

Ebisuya will have to wait for the result of the Tuesday's semis game to determine its finals foe. Wushin will play on Tuesday's last semis match against the winner of the University of Loyola-Cool Water tiff tonight.

Masters

Ebisuya 83 – Casabuena 18, Opone 17, Moises 17, Santos 12, Rebuyon 6, Olivos 6, Abedes 5, Morales 3.

Wushin 64 – S. Ebuen 17, Garon 15, Dayrit 12, Tobias 6, Carino 6, O. Ebuen 2.

Scoring by quarters: 24-14, 41-30, 55-47, 81-64.

Open

Noni Saipan 108 – Bernardo 23, Abuel 21, Tamayo 20, Pantaleon 13, Demapan 11, Aquino 6, Mortos 4, Lerio 3.

Saipan Fresh 99 – Pagarao 28, Estolas 23, Sanciangco 18, Factor 8, Opone 6, Gapor 6, De Guzman 5, Rebuyon 2.

Scoring by quarters: 18-23, 42-46, 69-68, 108-99.

HEO

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in the next round.

From Christchurch, the CNMI player is heading to Glen Innes in Auckland, New Zealand this weekend to compete in the Auckland 18 and Under ITF Summer Championships. The Auckand netfest will start on Feb. 1 and will run until Feb. 6 on the hard courts of the Scarbro Tennis Centre.

Again, Heo is part of the main draw of the tournament in Auckland. He will enter his second tournament in New Zealand with his highest ranking so far since making it to the Junior ITF Circuit last year. From No. 850, Heo is now ranked at No. 833 after his win in Christchurch.

His ranking is the 24th best among the 34 players who made it to the main draw in Auckland or 10 notches higher than Pacific Oceania teammate and Fiji netter Chris Hargrove (No. 1,564).

New Zealand's Ben McLachhan is the highest-ranked player in the draw at No. 46, followed by Australia's Ben Wagland (No. 85), New Zealand's Jaden Grinter (No. 87) and Adam Lee (No. 102), and Taipei's Chieh-Fu Wang (No. 161).

Japan, Hong Kong, and Thailand also have ranking players in the main draw, while New Caledonia's Aymeric Mara and Yohan Citre are in the qualifying draw. Heo had already played against the two New Caledonia bets in the past tournaments in Fiji and New Caledonia.

Twenty-two players from New Zealand, Japan, Indonesia, Croatia, and Great Britain are named alternates and are hoping to qualify in the main draw.

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"You are the ones who wanted to keep XTERRA and Tagaman going, more than 30 triathletes showed up at MVA to say we want the events to stay. Well, here is your opportunity to help, at a minimal cost, but of great value to us and the visiting athletes," former Taga, Inc. president Bill Sakovich said in an e-mail to triathletes.

"In most cases you can benefit from the friendship and also the knowledge that these triathletes bring with them. It's only for a short time and it's fun. They just basically need a place to sleep and eat some meals. It would really be nice to know someone from England, Australia, and New Zealand. Talk to the Quinns, Hammermeisters, Grafs, and a few others who have done it in the past," added Sakovich, who is expected to return to Saipan early in March to assists in the staging of the two events.

Visiting athletes also need bikes, as it will be difficult for them to bring their own bikes to Saipan. Mojica said those who want to help could either lend their bikes for free or have them rented.

"Please step up to the plate guys," Mojica said.

Those willing to help are encouraged to call Mojica at 483-4274 or email him at wolf@saipan.com for more information.

TEAM

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breakfast for two, and medals. Runners-up will get a free 90-day membership to Palms and medals, while third finishers will win dinner certificates for two at the Palms and medals.

The champions in the full course will also have their names on the perpetual trophy, which will be on display at the Palms year-round. Medals will also be given to the Top 3 finishers in the sport and rookie courses and in the youth division (girls and boys).

All participants will then be eligible to win Michelob Ultra's new trek mountain bike, which will be raffled off during the presentation of prizes.

Next weekend's race is being supported by Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan Mayor's Office, Department of Public Health, Palms Resort Saipan, Michelob Ultra, IT&E,

Konflikt MMA, Digital Motion, Saipan Bike Pro, Duty Free Shoppers, Ltd., Red Rock Consulting, Brabu Pharmacy, Accelerade, XTERRA Saipan, Tagaman Triathlon, and Taga Inc.

"We're lucky to live in a place where the entire community comes together to support athletic events like this one. It just goes to show how much our partners in the public and private sectors care about the health of our residents, as well as Saipan's future as a destination for sports tourism," Ruszala said.

For more information about Northern Passage, contact Ruszala at 287-2723 or via e-mail at brad_ruszala@gmail.com. (***Roselyn B. Monroyo)***

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Noni, Ebisuya gain finals entry

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Noni Saipan and Ebisuya punched separate finals tickets after outclassing their semifinals foes in the 2009 PILCOWA Basketball League Thursday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

Noni worked its way back from a 14-point deficit in the first period to thwart Saipan Fresh, 108-99, and made a sort of return trip to the finals of the open division. Most of Noni Saipan's players suited up for MIGS, which lost in the championship series against Diamond during the first edition of the PILCOWA caging in 2008.

In the masters division, Ebisuya wasted a double-digit lead in the first half before Ernie Moises sparked a rally in the fourth quarter and restored order on the team en route to an 83-64 win over Wushin Corp.

Ebisuya and Noni Saipan's opponents in the separate best-of-three title series will be determined only after Tuesday's games. IT&E will first square off against pennant champion Diamond Ali'i tonight with the winner facing Saipan Fresh on Tuesday for the second and last finals berth.

Saipan Fresh failed to notch the first finals berth when it allowed Noni to recover in the last three minutes of the opening canto.

A 6-0 start gave Saipan Fresh early control of the game and it padded its lead to as much as 14, 18-4, before Noni bounced back, capitalizing on the absence of the former's starters in the closing minutes of the first quarter. A 14-5 windup moved Noni within five

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Saipan Fresh Market's Jesse Mina and Noni Saipan's Glenn Aquino jockey for position in the rebound play during their game in the PILCOWA caging on Thursday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Heo loses in Round of 16, heads to Auckland

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior tennis player Ji Hoon Heo faltered in his quarterfinals bid in the 2010 Sunsmart 18 and Under Canterbury Championships after losing in the Round of 16 on Wednesday at the Scenic Circle Tennis Centre in Christchurch, New Zealand.

The 11th-seeded Heo bowed to a higher-ranked Chris Simich (No. 8) of New Zealand in straight sets, 3-6, 1-6. Simich went on to march to the semifinals, but lost to Thailand's Natasith Luesantia, 3-6, 4-6. The Thai bet and third-seeded Luesantia was set to duel the fifth-ranked Anton Bettink of New Zealand in the singles finals yesterday.

The tournament in Christchurch, which was Heo's first, had a 64-player draw in the singles competition and the CNMI netter gained a bye in the first round.

Heo then started his campaign in the Auckland tournament with a 6-2, 6-1 win over New Zealand's Jake McCartney before losing to Simich

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Switzerland's Renata Bucher, seen here chasing leaders in the swim leg of last year's XTERRA Saipan, is among the off-island triathletes needing a place to stay for the 2010 edition of the Crown Jewel and Tagaman Triathlon.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Home stay, bikes needed for XTERRA, Tagaman

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI's hospitality will be tested the most in March, as the organizer of 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championships and 2010 Tagaman Triathlon has asked for the community's help in providing home stay and bikes to off-island participants.

Wolf Mojica of Taga, Inc., which is organizing the two triathlon events on Saipan, said there are at least 10 off-island triathletes looking for a place to stay in the duration of XTERRA Saipan and Tagaman. XTERRA Saipan is set for March 13, while Tagaman will hit the road on March 20. Usually, off-island participants arrive two days before the race and stay for another day after the tournament.

Mojica said among those looking for home stay are defending champions Sam Gardner of the United Kingdom and Renate Bucher of Switzerland, Gardner's compatriot Michael Hiscott, Daz Parker, and Emma Ruth Scott, and Australia's Jason Chalker.

Providing home stay has become a tradition for members of the sports community, benefiting not only the visitors, but also the gracious hosts.

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Team DFS, Manglona to join Northern Passage

Tinian's Joshua Manglona and riders from DFS are among the first wave of bikers who have committed to participate in the inaugural Northern Passage.

Organizer Brad Ruszala said Manglona and Team DFS will be battling seasoned bikers and newcomers in the Feb. 6 race, which will have three courses, namely, rookie, sports, and full. The mountain bike race will prepare Manglona and company for the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship and Tagaman Triathlon, which will be held on March 13 and 20, respectively.

Northern Passage will begin and end at the upper terrace parking lot at the Palms Resort Saipan. Registration will start at 6am, while the mountain bike race will kick off at 7am. Entry fee is $20.

Cash prizes await the top finishers in the full course with the first placer in the men's and women's divisions receiving $100 each, a one-night stay at Palms Resort with

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Triathlete Lewie Tenorio designed the course map for the 2009 Nothern Passage that will hit the road on Feb. 6.